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A 1965 summer training program for 90 VISTA volunteers at Monte Vista, Colorado, is described and evaluated in this report. The program was designed to prepare VISTA trainees to work in poverty areas by providing individual helping services and by planning and organizing community action. The trainees lived and worked in Monte Vista, a small agricultural town with a substantial underprivileged Spanish-American population. In addition to learning about poverty and cultural differences, the trainees were taught helping service skills to make the poor more upwardly mobile. Each volunteer was placed for a 1- or 2-day supervised field experience in migrant camps, Project Head Start classrooms, homemaking classrooms for AFDC mothers, law enforcement agencies, and public health and welfare departments. In addition to information on program organization and administration, the report contains anecdotal and general descriptions of the volunteers' field experience and copies of an evaluation questionnaire and resulting data. (BD)

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THE MONTE VISTA STORY

An Evaluation Report
on the
MONTE VISTA PROJECT

A Training Program for

VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA

June 19 - September 10, 1965

by
Howard Higman
Robert Hunter
William T. Adams

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO EXTENSION DIVISION

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Action Research on Socialization Processes Project
Program of Research on Social and Cultural Processes
Institute of Behavioral Science
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado
1965

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Report Number: 411965

THE MONTE VISTA STORY

INSTITUTE OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

Program of Research on Social and Cultural Process
Action Research in Socialization Processes Project

REPORT NUMBER 411965

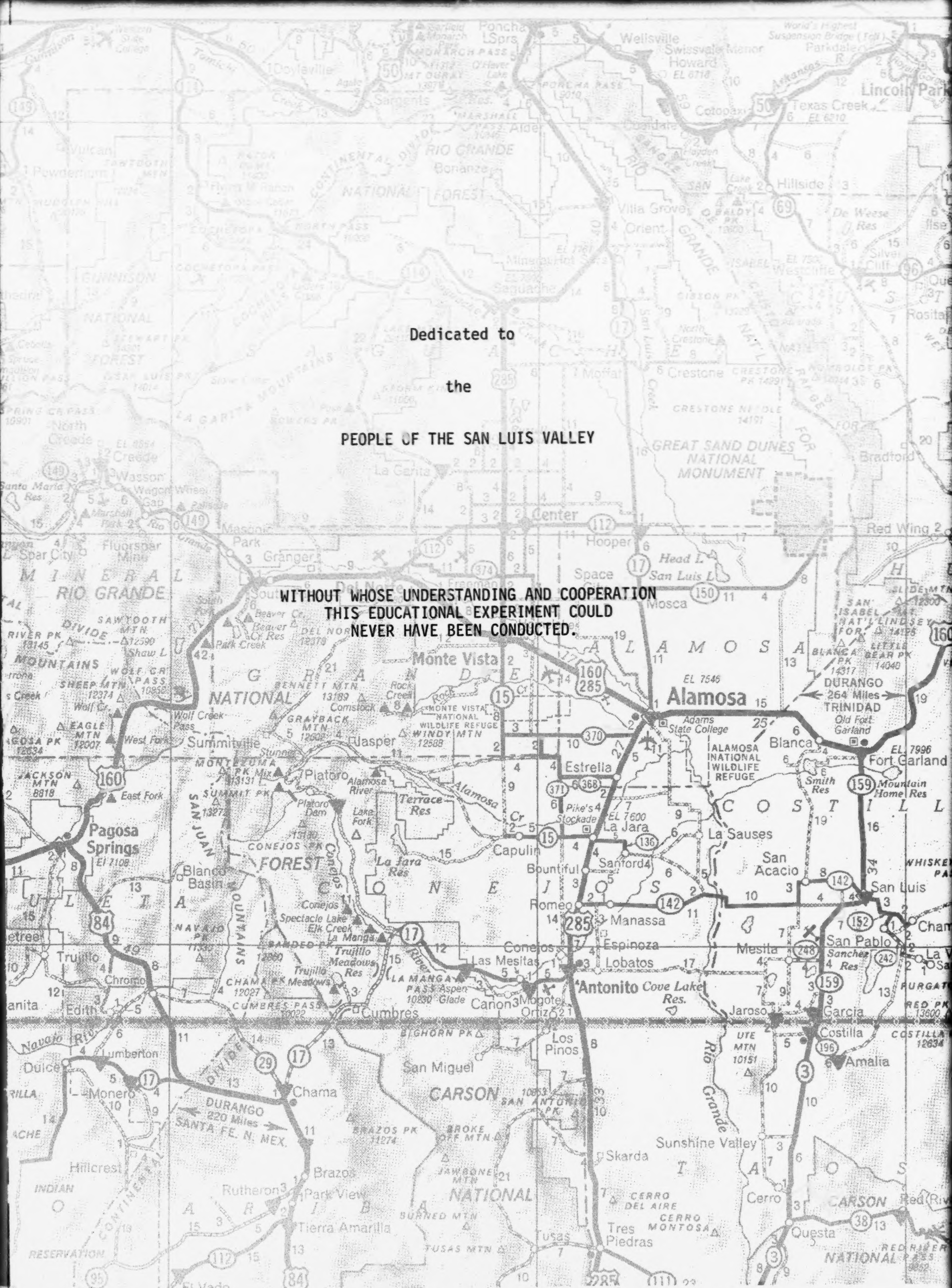
A REPORT ON A VISTA TRAINING PROGRAM CONDUCTED BY EXTENSION DIVISION, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Dedicated to

the

PEOPLE OF THE SAN LUIS VALLEY

WITHOUT WHOSE UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION
THIS EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT COULD
NEVER HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED.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Center
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Mosca
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Los Pinos
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Carson National
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Tusas
Sunshine Valley
Cerro
Questa
El Vado
Rio Grande

Preface

The government's poverty program represents a new development in American history and is, in part, an outgrowth of international developments since World War II. At the end of the war the United States embarked upon a massive program for the economic restoration of Western Europe and Japan and, subsequently -- starting with President Truman's Point Four Program -- economic development of underdeveloped nations. Americans became used to tithing for foreign aid. In the most recent development in this line we find the American Peace Corps helping the poor to help themselves.

The discovery that one fifth of our nation is living in poverty as abject as that to be found abroad came as a shock to President Kennedy when he was touring western Virginia. The phrase, "The affluent society," had gained common currency in a nation whose prosperity and wealth had grown to exceed anything history has ever known. Americans decided that if they could concern themselves with poverty in Africa, the Middle East, or Latin America, they have an obligation to the people whose conditions are no better in our own country.

In spite of the leadership provided by the President, the implications of the poverty program are not yet well understood by many Americans, some of whom feel that it is a political gimmick or the "New Deal Revisited." There is no parallel in the poverty program to the New Deal, which was an attempt of a nation engaged in its greatest depression to pull itself up by its bootstraps. Today this nation faces the problem of poverty as the richest society in the world. Somehow, with technological change and the problems associated with the emerging world society, one fifth of the nation and thirty-three per cent of the present high-school-age youth have been passed by and left outside the mainstream of the good life. In part, the problems the poverty program seeks to solve are the result of the myth of the classless society. We have designed middle-class institutions, and persons for whom they are inappropriate have simply been asked to vanish from the school system and the employment market into the slums -- both urban and rural. Automation and mechanization have abolished the jobs that previously existed for the sub-verbal and unskilled.

The notion that the poverty program is to be simply a bigger and better welfare handout of public support to dependent people is wrong. The program is precisely the reverse. It is designed not to perpetuate dependency by systemic inertia; but rather to abolish it, rendering all Americans independent from public aid and dependent only as all of us are both in public and private enterprise in an interdependent system.

If one half of the young men and women of the over ten thousand presently being trained in Job Corps use the skills they learn there to lead normal lives as wage-earning employees, their total contribution to the economy of the United States in their lifetimes will exceed the appropriations of Congress for the operation of the Office of Economic Opportunity. This, of course, is only a fraction of the program.

Established institutions, oldline agencies, charity, welfare, public schools, universities, departments of sociology, schools of social work, police, juvenile courts, public health departments have functioned within the bureaucractic confines of their own evolution as a stable system in which the problem and dependency in America has grown rather than been alleviated. If we as professionals already knew how to tackle this problem, the problem would not exist. The presence of the problem itself is a monument to the inadequacy of the established ways of doing things. Before the problems are solved, there will be experimentation, innovation, trial and error, success and failure, and only then will we say that there has emerged a new technology in our universities, schools, and public agencies.

The new knowledge concerning the development of the human brain assures us that widespread mass preschool education has the most favorable prognosis for immediate success. As we go up the age level, the problems become increasingly more intricate and probably offer decreasing rewards. But, nevertheless, the problems must be tackled at every level. The charge that the poverty program is not coordinated -- is in fact chaotic -- is, of course, its virtue. The coordination and lack of chaos in the established institutions, while they did achieve coordination, nevertheless did not serve to prevent the rise and proliferation of the problem. In the last analysis the blame lies on the universities, for it is in the university that the orthodoxy of bureaucracy in all of the professions is born. A new spirit, a new philosophy, a new technology, a new definition of goals is emerging. Those of us in the established institutions may choose to remain within the work system of the established institutions. After all the schools do a good job for sixty-eight per cent. There is room for the continuation of the established bureaucracy. But, if we do not choose to join the new effort, we should at least applaud it; if we cannot applaud it, we should tolerate it; if we cannot tolerate it, we should ignore it; if we cannot ignore it, I suppose we will fight it. If we do, I believe we will lose.

Boulder, Colorado

Howard Higman

Acknowledgments

Through the cooperation of many persons the Monte Vista Training Program for Volunteers in Service to Americas was executed. We wish to recognize these persons:

. . . to the people of Monte Vista who welcomed us to their town.

. . . to the people of Lariat who made us warmly welcome.

. . . to the staff of the Washington VISTA office who gave help -- lots of it -- and showed such interest in the Monte Vista Project.

. . . to Mr. and Mrs. Peters and their staff at the El Monte Hotel in Monte Vista.

. . . to Mrs. Blanche McCoy and her staff at the Oxford Hotel.

. . . to Dr. William Bradley, the Project Physician, who gave so much of his time and effort to the volunteers and to the staff.

. . . to the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce for the encouragement of the training program.

. . . to the Monte Vista School District for permitting us the use of many of their facilities.

. . . to Dean Mack Easton of the University of Colorado Extension Division and the staff members of his office: Assistant Dean Avon Bristow, Mr. William Grelle, Mr. John Swenson, and particularly to John Tomson who spent untold hours laboring on the accounts of the program.

. . . to the Monte Vista Journal and the radio station, KSLV, who showed sympathetic understanding of the training program.

. . . to the faculty who responded quickly and wholeheartedly to the request to lecture.

. . . and to the staff supervisors, each of whom threw himself so enthusiastically into his role.

. . . to these persons -- and still more -- we wish to express our appreciation

. . . and our thanks.

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I

History of the Project

The University of Colorado was requested by the Department of Labor in the late summer of 1964 to set up a training program for Employment Security counsellors, used to working with high school "stay-ins" and finding them employment upon graduation from high school, to learn how to work with the youth who leave probably in the ninth grade and are unemployed, unskilled, and ill-mannered. Recognizing that our campus curriculum was oblivious to the culture of these people, first it was decided to devise a new and unorthodox training program. This included holding school in the skid row area of Denver. The classroom was an old warehouse. Second, members of the poor -- drop-out boys and girls, ADC mothers, and unemployed men recruited at the employment office -- having been turned down for jobs, were hired as "basic instructors" to lecture to us about the world in which they lived, now they got there, and how they made out. We learned that the problem was not one of motivation, but of the opportunity structure. Third, our trainees, posing as unskilled persons without employment records, actually made field trips. They rode with police officers at night and came into direct contact with the relationship between the officers of the law and the disadvantaged. The results of this experimental training program, which were described in a report called The Colorado Story, indicate a learning experience by the staff quite as extensive as that by the students. The subsequent performance of the trainees attests to the fact that actual changes took place which are having practical effects in several cities where they work. As a result of this experiment, the OEO suggested that the University of Colorado might like to train VISTA volunteers to work with rural poverty in the Southwest. Following the experience with the Labor Department, using much the same principles, we proposed a training program consisting of some eight field experiences combined with seminars and lectures (from both a professional staff and "basic instructors"). Again, we removed the school from the university campus and conducted it in the rural area of southwestern Colorado. We found an ideal setting in the San Luis Valley where there are six counties in a basin on the continental divide. The county in which we located the school and had our headquarters is a small prosperous farming county containing within it, however, pockets of Spanish-American poverty. It is within a short drive of several counties which are almost totally poverty stricken.

Although not all Spanish-Americans are poverty stricken and not all of the poor of the Southwest are Spanish-American, nevertheless the predominant problem in the Southwest is among persons of Hispanic descent. These people are descendents from the original Spanish settlers in the Southwest who were there long before the pilgrim fathers landed at Plymouth Rock. Their fortunes were reversed by the sinking of the Spanish Armada at which time the power center shifted in Europe from Madrid to London. As a backwash colonial power shifted from San Luis to Boston. First, these self-sufficient agricultural Hispanoes lost their land as did the Indians to the Anglos by means of registry deeds and law. What land they did not lose in this way, they lost by deprivation of water. What land they did not lose this way, they lost by taxes. Under their law taxes were based on the annual productivity of the land. In lean years with no productivity, no taxes. Anglo Saxon taxation was based on acreage and, sooner or later, the remaining Spanish holdings went up for tax sale. So two generations ago these people had been rendered farm laborers. Now, except for the very short-run stoop labor, these people are being replaced by machinery. We saw in the Valley this summer potatoes that had been planted, cultivated, irrigated, fertilized, dug, sorted, washed, and packed without one potato ever having been touched by a human hand. Displaced in the declining agricultural environment, the Spanish Americans are flocking to Kansas City, Denver, and Los Angeles where the forty-five year-old patriarchal father will never find a steady job nor will his sixteen-year-old illiterate son, although his wife can work as a domestic in an Anglo-Saxon home and his daughter can work in a laundry hand ironing.

In the San Luis Valley there is also the migrant stream of agricultural workers where the trainees could see the problems of health, sanitation, and an absence of the most rudimentary care for children.

With the cooperation of business leaders, public officials, the public school, and professional men in the town of Monte Vista, arrangements were made to use the Valley as a training center. It was pointed out to the leaders that the University was not invading the Valley to engage in social change, that the Valley had not requested OEO help, and that the training program would be the guest of the Valley -- at the conclusion of which the trainees would go in fact to places where their services had been requested. In the course of the summer, however, some of the towns in the Valley became interested in the VISTA volunteers, made application, and three towns have programs of their own request as of this writing. After the departure of the training program, the Chamber of Commerce of the city of Monte Vista adopted a resolution requesting that the town be a permanent training center.

As was the case in the Larimer Street project with the Labor Department, the staff learned as much from the twelve-week experience in the field as did the trainees.

II.

Proposed Program*

A. Purposes: "Volunteers are to be provided with knowledge and skills appropriate for enabling them to provide services in meeting the needs of the poor in a variety of projects designed to combat poverty."[1] This proposal from the University of Colorado asks for the establishment of a training center designed to provide knowledge and skills in order that the VISTA volunteer may work in rural poverty areas in the USA. Rural projects for VISTA will need volunteers specifically acquainted with the nature of rural America, particularly those rural pockets of poverty. Much of this poverty is found in the rural southwest and throughout the mountain west and Great Plains in which there are a number of communities inhabited by Spanish Americans and Indians.[2] Monte Vista, Colorado is characteristic of these communities.

The University of Colorado, therefore, proposes a VISTA Training Center be established in Monte Vista[3] through the University of Colorado Extension Division.

The trainees and staff will live, work, and study in Monte Vista during five weeks of the training program. Their field placements, which are explained in detail on page 6, will be in rural social agencies and social systems. The content of the training course will be provided in such a way that the trainees will learn while they work. Specifically they will receive interdisciplinary content on the culture of poverty, social and personal deviance and its relation to poverty, ways out of poverty, expanding the opportunity systems within and without, and skills for providing helping services to the poor. (To be detailed in Part II -- Training Operational Plan) This content and approach have been successfully tested previously by the University of Colorado in its training program for the Youth Opportunity Center personnel of the U.S. Employment Security Offices[4] in October, 1964.

It is anticipated that the VISTA volunteer will gain invaluable knowledge through the following training experiences of this school: (1) seminars on the culture of poverty; (2) the supervised rural field placements; (3) the use of basic instructors (faculty recruited from the poor themselves);[5] (4) the short, intensive five days in the urban setting of Denver (in the poverty-skid row area); and (5) the actual living in the homes and in the areas of poverty. He will learn about the causes and conditions of poverty, the resources available to assist the poor, and aid them to develop creative new solutions to their problems. He will also find new perspectives and acceptance of these people. He will learn skills which will make all of the above possible. Also he will re-evaluate his own feelings about himself in relation to the many tasks ahead.

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*Originally, this proposal was submitted to VISTA and approved as it appears on these pages. In the implementation of this proposal, minor and major changes in the program occurred. These changes are documented in this report.

[1] Quote from the Guidelines for Preparation of "A VISTA Training Program."

[2] Research findings are indicating a surprising uniformity in the characteristics of the deprived persons whether they are found among the American Negro, Spanish-America, the Puerto Rican, or the poor white.

[3] Monte Vista, as a site for training, is described on page 4.

[4] See The Colorado Story, Boulder, Colorado, 1965. Pages 23-30 further explained in body of this report.

B. Objectives: Specifically, the program is designed to prepare the trainees to move into areas of poverty and to work effectively. They will be able to provide individualized helping services as well as to plan and execute community action. They will be able to assist professionals already engaged in the helping services in these areas; they will work in rural community action programs and among migrant laborers; they will be able to work in institutions in remote, rural areas. A few words about the setting is in order.

Rural Field Training Setting

The Settings: Monte Vista, Colorado, has been selected as the site of this rural training program for VISTA volunteers. It lends itself well to this program for several reasons.

First, it is a small town of 3,500 inhabitants located near the banks of the Rio Grande River in the San Luis Valley of South Central Colorado. The town site was staked out in 1884 and called Lariat. When it was incorporated in 1886, the town's name was changed to Monte Vista which means mountain view in Spanish.

It serves as a trading center for a large area comprising the highest irrigated agricultural district in the nation. Known as the potato capitol of the West, Rio Grande County's production is the largest per farm in Colorado. A large migrant population arrives in mid-summer.

Second, the town has a very large permanent Spanish American population living largely in poverty. Many of the houses are made of logs and mud.

Third, near Monte Vista are two other communities: (1) Del Norte, the seat of Rio Grande County, with a population of 1900 which lies fourteen miles to the south; and (2) Alamosa, the seat of Alamosa County, with a population of 6500 which lies seventeen miles to the south.

These two communities are very similar to Monte Vista. They have large Spanish-American populations, migrant workers in the summer, and noticeable pockets of poverty.

Fourth, with these three communities combined, sixty rural field placements for the VISTA volunteers are assured. They are significantly close to each other, with Monte Vista as the base, so that all the trainees would live in Monte Vista. A hotel is available for housing the trainees and staff -- the El Monte Hotel. Classroom facilities will be provided by the public schools. In some cases, the classes will be held in rented buildings in the areas of blighted housing and commerce.

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[5] The Colorado Story, pages 31-50.

The superintendent of Public Schools, the Chamber of Commerce, and other opinion leaders are excited about the prospects of having the rural VISTA Training Program located there.

Monte Vista is 205 miles almost directly south of Denver and is easily accessible by way of an excellent new highway, Colorado 285. The highway winds through the Rocky Mountains and enters the San Luis Valley at Salida.

C. Methods and Techniques:

1(a) The substantive areas:

(1) Poverty in rural communities -- general nature and causation.
(2) Impact on families living in poverty.
(3) The opportunity system in rural areas.
(4) Mobility and how it affects the migrants.
(5) Ethnicity: The Spanish-American -- who is he and what is his past, present, and future?
(6) Dependency and neglect -- the social service crises.
(7) Personal deviance -- alcohol, divorce, functional mental disorders, crime, and their relationship to poverty in rural areas.
(8) Learning barriers -- blocks in the opportunity system.
(9) Health and disease -- birth, death, and sanitation.
(10) Ways out and up -- processes for gaining better health, education, employment, family stability, community participation, and respect. (The theory behind the skills.)

These substantive areas are more specific than a listing of sociology of poverty, poverty and public health, psychological aspects of people in poverty. While they are more specific they are, perhaps, not described in adequate detail. Greater detail is presented in Part II.

Faculty experts are available to give seminars with content on these substantive areas. The faculty is interdisciplinary, drawn heavily from sociology, psychology, public health, anthropology, public administration, economics, social work, and psychiatry. Special care will be taken to assure the correct balance between the presentation of subject matter which orients the volunteer to poverty situations and presentation of opportunities for acquisition of practical skills.

1(b) The special skills:

1. Learning to listen to others and, consequently, learning from them.

2. Learning to work in a helping relationship in a group as well as individual basis with the peoples of the disadvantaged rural areas.

3. Learning to communicate effectively with the poor and then, further, learning to turn the communication into effective support, change, and growth.

4. Learning to mobilize the community in such a way that the disadvantaged can gain upward mobility.

5. Learning some specific skills peculiar to professional career roles such as:

    (1) casework in a welfare public assistance program.
    (2) medical assistance and referral in public health cases.
    (3) correctional work in probation and law enforcement agencies.
    (4) a teacher in migrant schools or a tutor-specialist for educationally disadvantaged families.
    (5) a homemaker for families of the poor.
    (6) a public affairs specialist, interpreting citizenship roles for disadvantaged families.
    (7) an employment counselor to help the youth and adults find work.
    (8) a nursery school teacher to work with disadvantaged children in pre school and nursery settings for ADC mothers and in migrant day care centers.
    (9) construction work to assist the families to improve their homes.
    (10) recreation to assist in leisure time activities.
    (11) translator-teaching people how to phrase their needs and desires in terms which can be understood by the community at large.

These are specific skills around which both academic content and learning experiences in the field placement will focus.

2. The techniques to be employed: Through an intensive work-study training program, the VISTA volunteer trainees will be introduced to, and involved in, learning experiences related to the above-mentioned substantive areas and special skills.

The techniques to be employed are these:

(a) Full training session seminars -- expert faculty from appropriate disciplines will be brought to the VISTA training program to give trainees academic content for the substantive areas described previously.

(b) Demonstrations:

1. Basic Instructors: Part of the teaching will be done by families and individuals in poverty. These will be recruited from minority groups and poverty-stricken Anglo families. Some will be youth from the area and circumstances. Through interviewing, group interviewing, and sensitivity experiences of a new nature the trainees will interact on a first-hand, vis-a-vis basis with those who know and feel most about being poor, why they are poor, what life in rural areas is like, and why their prospects are dim. The avenues are open to this staff for the

recruitment of these "basic instructors." Skilled interviewers are available to direct the sessions. (For a more complete explanation, see The Colorado Story.)

2. Observing law enforcement: During the training session, the VISTA trainees will ride with the police at night or spend an evening in counseling at the local jail. They will be introduced first hand to the interrelationships of poverty, minority status, and law enforcement in rural areas.

3. Working as a migrant: One day will be spent working as a migrant in the fields. He will not be identified as a VISTA trainee. He will do stoop labor.

(c) Field Placements -- Trainees will spend at least twelve days in the field placement at the agencies to which they are assigned. Rural areas usually have only two-or-three-man agencies in the traditional helping services. For instance, the welfare departments usually have no more than three workers in rural counties; the courts have parttime probation officers; the public health service has a visiting nurse and part-time physician. The nursery school and day care center for the migrants are more permanent in program during their seasonal existence. The families themselves will be used as sites for field placements.

(d) Discussions -- These small and large group discussions will be held in order to allow the trainee to verbalize his experiences in the field placement as well as the demonstration. He will be able to use the other trainees and the faculty as a sounding board. He will learn from the others as they discuss. The exchange will be invaluable and will lend reality and restraint where needed.

(e) The Rationale -- The work-study experiments have proven the rationale for this program design. Through academic content and actual field experience, the student gets an intense, reality-oriented education.[6] Learning by doing is effective and well tested.

Because we believe that settings in which the learning takes place has a direct influence on the rate of learning, the settings will be carefully chosen. While in Monte Vista, the trainees will stay at the El Monte Hotel. They will attend classes at a local school in the poverty area. They will work in placements in rural areas.

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[6] WICHE (The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education) has pioneered in the work-study program experiment in mental health.

While in Denver, the trainees will live at the Oxford Hotel (adjacent to the skid row area of Denver.

At times they will live with the persons in poverty with whom they are working.

The Program Details will be Located as Follows:

1. The faculty will be housed at the El Monte Hotel (trainees also will live there).
2. Classes will be held at a local school at times and at the El Monte at others.
3. Field placements will be assigned at local agencies in Monte Vista, Del Norte, and Alamosa.
4. Field observations: Observing law enforcement at night.
5. In Denver the entire program will be at the Oxford Hotel.

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP

In Monte Vista

1. Through seminars and demonstrations the trainees will first be introduced to the problems and content surrounding poverty.
2. After the first week they will be given supervised field placement assignments. On each third or fourth day they will assemble for further seminars, discussions, and demonstrations. Informal meetings will be conducted by field supervisors each evening to obtain feedback and provide opportunities for discussion of field experience.
3. The final three days will be devoted to in-depth analyses of the learning through work and study in the rural areas.

In Denver

1. Five days will be devoted to seminars, discussion, and field observations on urban poverty with a special emphasis on the lines of immigration from the rural to the urban communities of the poverty family. The trainees will be given intensive content on the impact of urbanization on minority Spanish families. The conflicts, contrasts, strengths, and failures will be studied and observed.[7]
2. A final analysis and discussion will take place on the urban poverty experiences. A summary of the training will complete the program. The final two days will be allocated to the national VISTA staff.

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[7] The University of Colorado Behavioral Science Institute is studying the impact of urbanization on Spanish-Americans from rural areas under an NIMH grant.

PART II. THE CURRICULUM PLAN

Throughout we have indicated that the curriculum will be interdisciplinary. At this point, a more specific curriculum outline is given to supplement "the substantive areas."

Content will cover:

A. Sociology of the Culture of Poverty

1. Dimensions of poverty and disadvantage in rural areas.
2. Deprivation -- being alone, isolated, and unable.
3. The time continuum -- unfulfilled futures.
4. Self image -- image decay and poverty.
5. Joblessness -- the effects of unemployment.
6. People on the move -- rootlessness.

B. Poverty and Cultural Differences

1. Spanish-Americans in the Southwest -- their history, their present, their past. (Extensive content)
2. The structure of rural community services.
3. The function of rural community service.
4. Poverty, minority status, and social dependency. The social services' potentials and failures.
5. Barriers to education due to cultural differences and poverty.
6. Being different -- how does it feel.
7. Public health, the poor and disease, birth and death.

C. Ways Out of Poverty (learning skills to assist persons in poverty through upward mobility)

1. Breaking out of the system -- how to go about it.
2. Potentials for life -- how to find them.
3. Restoration of decent self images through a support toward self-sufficiency.
4. Motivations for the disenchanted.
5. Using the skills of inclusion.
6. Expanding opportunities -- within first, then without.

D. Helping Service Skills (content given to supplement the learning in the field placement)

1. Community development in relation to community structure and function.
2. The future of rural life in America, economy, politics, and social action.
3. How to work with professionals -- the complete (sic) team.
4. After understanding -- what next?
5. Preparation for the future -- the fulfillment.

Field Placements

With sixty trainees in the program located in a rural area, the field placement aspect of the training center must be planned with flexibility. Some rearrangements will undoubtedly be necessary. The following are proposed placements and expected learning experiences:

1. Public Health Services in the rural counties. Monte Vista, Del Norte, and Alamosa are served by a District Public Health Service. The trainees will be assigned to the visiting public health nurse and a local physician. They will learn about medical practices among migrants, poor persons, and minorities. They will serve as medical aides and will do such things as assist in health care, conduct an epidemiological survey based on discovering the number of houses with wells, distance between the wells and the outhouse, and the depth of the well. The study is on the epidemiology of streptococcifaecalis.

   They will also learn about child birth and diseases. They will learn how to help these professionals give better health care in rural areas. The local physician in Monte Vista insists he can make use of trainees in the study of avoidance of birth defects. They will also learn in the local community hospital in Monte Vista where many indigents are treated.

   The visiting public health nurse is one of the few persons providing helping services to most persons in rural areas throughout the United States.

2. Migrant Day Care Centers and Head Start. Several migrant worker camps in Alamosa and Monte Vista operate during the summer. The VISTA trainee will be placed in these settings to serve as a teacher aide and child care aide. He will be expected to learn about those things that interfere with and affect the educational development of disadvantaged areas. He will learn group care skills, recreation skills, remedial education skills, and much about mobility and cultural differences. He will do tutoring and special work with the families in interpreting these experiences for the parents. He will learn much about child care techniques of a broad range. These centers are at the migrant laborers' camps. Head Start programs are planned for the valley and will be utilized.

3. County Department of Welfare. Alamosa County and Rio Grande County will both be included in this type of placement. The trainee will be a case work aide and will be expected to learn about social welfare services in rural areas. Most rural counties do not have separate child welfare divisions, thus, the case load will be varied -- largely aid to dependent children and general assistance. Some general assistance is given to migrant families.

   Del Norte is the county seat and will house the welfare department. Most cases are in Monte Vista, however. The trainee will learn welfare policy, welfare regulations, welfare philosophy and how these apply to or conflict with poverty, minority status, and mobility. The experience should be geared toward a progressive involvement of the trainee with actual clients. The emphasis here is on direct services rather than financial support.

4. The County Court, Probation, Detention, and Law Enforcement. Alamosa and Monte Vista, as well as Del Norte, will be used. In these law enforcement and correctional placements the trainee will be serving as an aide to the police, the probation officer, and the jailor. In some cases the man may be the same. The learning experiences will focus on the poor and minority person in conflict with the law. The trainee will be serving an apprenticeship and will work as an assistant probation officer. He will have direct contact with the youngsters in trouble, will help them find work, iron out family problems, give assistance in tutoring or work skills. He will lend support, assistance, guidance, and perhaps a new model of behavior to the boys in trouble. Rates of delinquency are rather high in Monte Vista and Alamosa among the Spanish-American boys. Here the trainee will learn about utilizing community resources, opening legitimate opportunities for the disadvantaged in trouble with the law, and learning how the skills of probation services are developed. He will learn a great deal about delinquency causation as well as rural law enforcement. He will learn first hand about dependency and neglect and how they relate to delinquency and crime. He will learn about the court system and the legal structure of enforcement in the rural areas. Both boys and girls have difficulties in these areas. The trainees will be assigned accordingly.

5. Homemaking Services. Some trainees will be placed in homes of the ADC and general assistance families which are currently suffering acute crises such as a new birth in the family, a serious illness, a detention or incarceration of a family member. In these cases the homemaker aide will assist the family in household chores, child care, patient care, and other activities such as taking members to appointments, helping them find work, and many other activities. By living with the people the aide will learn the effects of deprivation on the family, its members, and their relations with the community. Particularly in those families with many children in which there is a parent missing, the trainee will be able to work and learn about these skills needed in the helping services.

Throughout these placements, the trainees will receive supervision. The ratio of supervisor to trainee will be ten to one. The supervisors will maintain contacts with the agency staff and assure smooth operations at that level. Continuous, effective community relations are necessary in order for these placements to be effective as learning experiences for the trainees.

We will stress that the supervisors encourage the trainees to focus on two major tasks: (1) learning the skills to work with persons in poverty. (These are detailed in the section on special skills, page 9); (2) doing "research" while he is being educated. The trainee will collect knowledge as well as gain knowledge. During the field placement period, he will collect knowledge about the world of poverty. The knowledge will be recorded.

Simultaneously with his occupation with the formal instructional program, the trainee will be asked to watch for content in the field experience that can be classified under twelve headings listed below. These experiences or critical incidents will be recorded each night in the form of a log and ultimately compiled into what might be called themes of the culture of poverty. The content themes designed for his "research" will center on the following efforts:

1. Learn about medical needs of the poverty stricken.
2. Listen for cues regarding employment.
3. Listen for cues about time perspective and morale.
4. Look for leadership patterns and structure in poverty groups.
5. Listen for peer-group references and seek to understand reference-group behavior.
6. Listen for bureaucratic static.
7. Listen for attitudes about the law.
8. Look for references to FUN behavior.
9. Look and listen for cues regarding reverence.
10. Look for indications about geographic mobility.
11. Look for expressions of dependency on the public.

The field placement will not only be a learning experience regarding skills, awareness of self in relation to working with the poor, but it will be a major place in which the trainee will test his facts and theories about poverty, rural life, depression, minority status, and their inter-relationships.

III.

CONSULTING THE COMMUNITY

Any training program which requires students to obtain field experience in a community setting also requires special advice and consultation from experts who know the community well. The most expert are those -- both lay and professional -- who live in the community and who, because of their daily contact with problems and the way problems get solved, can shed the stern light of reality on projected plans.

To obtain information and advice, the staff invited some forty persons -- businessmen, public health nurses, sheriffs, welfare directors, local government officials, and private citizens -- to attend a symposium on the VISTA training project. The meeting was held at the El Monte Hotel, Monte Vista, Colorado, on June 24, 1965, from 9:00am until 4:30pm. Thirty-five persons responded to the invitation, came early in the day, stayed for lunch, and many remained well through the afternoon.

A brief scanning of the attendance list will demonstrate that the symposium participants came from all over the San Luis Valley. This kind of representation was important. The San Luis Valley contains a land area roughly equal in size to the State of New Jersey. The staff felt that VISTA trainees would have to cover virtually all parts of the Valley if they were to receive the kinds of field experience that their future jobs demanded.

The symposium served several important purposes. Participants were given an opportunity to share their knowledge and experience with the staff. During the discussions, new educational resources appeared. Confusion and misunderstanding were reduced. Persons the staff had not previously met offered new services and support. Thus, the assumptions the staff had used in preparing the training plan were tested and revised on the spot.

El Monte
HOTEL
COFFEE SHOP
RESTAURANT
Restaurant

The symposium also offered the people of the Valley a forum to discuss the "poverty program" in general. They spoke freely about their concern for the Valley's economy, their hopes, their fears. Many different views about the nature of poverty problems were presented. Frequent reference to personal experience with people who were poor kept the discussion on a commonsense level.

The symposium did not result in a consensus about poverty or solutions to the problems of poverty. Nor was that the purpose of the meeting. However, there was consensus that the meeting had cleared the air. A dialog was possible among persons who had genuine concern about the future of the San Luis Valley.

Roster of Symposium on the Structure of Poverty

Earl Ahrens, Reverend, Grace Baptist Chapel, Lariat
William Bartlett, Attorney, Monte Vista
Robert Beals, Director, Rio Grande County Department of Welfare
Bob Bowers, Sanitarian, Alamosa
G. H. Bruggeman, Father, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Monte Vista
Emilia Chavez, Rio Grande County Department of Welfare
Robert L. Clare, Merchant, Torres Switch
Glenn Coleman, Director, Saguache County Department of Welfare
John Daley, Superintendent, Colorado State Veteran's Center
L. F. DeSautell, Manager, Chamber of Commerce, Monte Vista
Cecil Frutchey, Technical Consultant, Lyman Wright and Sons, Monte Vista
Mabel Gilmore, Alamosa County and San Luis Valley Migratory Public Health Nurse
C. W. Hinkley, President, Monte Vista School Board
Donald Hitchcock, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Alamosa
Marcella Horn, Rio Grande County Department of Welfare
Andrew Hull, Chief of Police, Monte Vista
Wilson Kelso, Rio Grande County Commissioner
Charles L. Lackey, Del Norte
Lawrence Martinez, Police Department, Alamosa
Ward Mathias, Mathias Concrete Company, Monte Vista
Vernon McCallister, Rio Grande County Commissioner
Paul Michelson, Spanish American Baptist Mission, Monte Vista
Mary Lou Millsap, Rio Grande County Department of Welfare
Ruben Navarro, Sheriff, Costilla County, San Luis
Eluid Ortega, Presbyterian Church, San Pablo
Paul Pacheco, Ferdinand and Isabella Club, Lariat
Gilbert Padilla, The Lariat Committee, Lariat
John Raby, Saguache County Department of Welfare
Sally Roybal, Public Health Nurse, Conejos County
Virginia Ruch, Rio Grande County Department of Welfare
Donald G. Smith, Attorney, San Luis Community Action Association, Alamosa
Alfred Stroman, Insurance Broker, Monte Vista
Joel Thomas, Rio Grande County Department of Welfare
Henry Trujillo, Ferdinand and Isabella Club, Lariat
Frank Worley, Rio Grande County Commissioner

The Symposium

Preface

The thirty-five persons who attended the symposium represented many of the broad and diverse interests of the San Luis Valley. The overall atmosphere of the meeting can be characterized as one of serious concern for the problems of poverty, and as interest in the ways in which the War on Poverty can be expected to operate. While there seemed to be a number of areas of agreement, there were also areas of strong disagreement, particularly with regard to how solutions to problems of poverty should or could be applied in different sections of the Valley. As the meeting progressed, it became apparent that there was a lack of information about the Economic Opportunity Act and that there had been insufficient public discussion of the Community Action Program component of the act. The discussion which took place during the morning and afternoon was quite free with a great deal of give and take. The summary which appears below is an attempt to catch both the spirit and the content of the lively discourse.

VISTA and the Role of the VISTA Volunteer

Although the people of Monte Vista and the rest of the Valley had been informed that the University of Colorado was going to train VISTA volunteers in the area during the summer of 1965, there was considerable confusion about what VISTA was and what the training program would do. Rumors had preceded the arrival of the trainees. Some believed that VISTA was similar to the Job Corps, and were naturally concerned about how the juvenile delinquents from New York or Chicago would be controlled. Others suspected that the VISTA program was somehow associated with civil rights marches in the South or that the VISTA's might attempt to organize strikes among agricultural workers in the Valley. The University staff opened the meeting with a discussion of VISTA and the role of the VISTA volunteer in the War on Poverty.

Volunteers in Service to America is the domestic counterpart to the Peace Corps, which has received such enthusiastic acceptance in foreign countries. There has come a recognition that many of the problems of poverty which exist abroad also exist in the United States. VISTA, which was authorized under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, was created to attack poverty problems in the United States by establishing a corps of full-time volunteers who will work directly with America's poor to help them to help themselves.

VISTA volunteers receive no salary. They are given a living allowance for food and lodging which is modest and in keeping with the cost of living in the area where they serve. Their medical needs are provided. At the end of one year, they receive $50 for each month of service. VISTA's are indeed volunteers.

The VISTA's role is to live with and help persons who are in poverty in any way he can. He may work with children in preschool or recreation programs. He may provide literacy and citizenship training to the undereducated. He may work to improve sanitary conditions in migrant camps, provide homemaking services teach in Job Corps camps, or help the mentally ill. He may do just about anything that can help the poor to break out of the cycle of poverty.

It was pointed out that the majority of the trainees in Monte Vista were typical college students who were taking a year off to serve their country as volunteers. VISTA's are trained to understand the communities which request their services and not to take sides in local disputes or disagreements which each community is constantly in the process of working out. Volunteers do not enter a community at the direction of the federal government, but must be requested by a responsible public or private non-profit group which agrees to supervise their activities. VISTA's must work with the poor and they must be given tasks that are not the responsibility of existing employees. Their efforts, whether they work for the welfare department, a public health department, a church group, or a community action program, must provide services to the poor that would not be given if they were not present. Specific examples of the work of VISTA volunteers were described. The procedures for obtaining a volunteer were explained.

The Selection of Monte Vista and The San Luis Valley as a Training Site

Several of the symposium participants asked about the reasons for selecting Monte Vista as a site for training VISTA volunteers. Did this selection indicate that the government felt that Monte Vista had serious poverty problems?

We explained that the VISTA trainees in the University's program had indicated their desire to work with migrants in the southwestern United States. This meant that they needed to become acquainted with the problems of the Spanish-American in particular. Because of the dominance of agriculture in the Valley, several thousand migrants -- mostly Spanish-Americans -- would be present during the growing season. Monte Vista, centrally located in the Valley, had the physical facilities to house the trainees and staff and was large enough to absorb a hundred extra people without great strain. A number of local people, the school system, the welfare department, the ministerial alliance, and businessmen, had already indicated that they felt the program would be worthwhile and acceptable to the community. Finally, the natural beauty and climate of the San Luis Valley made it ideal from the University's viewpoint.

The Training Program

Several questions arose regarding the ways in which the VISTA's would be trained. The program for supervision, involving ten staff members who were to work with the volunteers in field placements, was described. The placements -- public health, county welfare, recreation, preschool, homemaking, rural law, and sanitation -- were enumerated. Staff emphasized that the trainees would make mistakes and that a major purpose of training was to correct those mistakes. Volunteers would be taught to be patient, to stay out of politics, and to leave religion alone. A description of the academic content -- lectures and classroom work -- was given. Townspeople would be welcome to attend any lectures that they would like to hear.

Finally, it was pointed out that the project was also a screening process to select the trainees who would be most likely to succeed when assigned to communities following training. Some of the volunteers could be expected to fail in the training program, and the townspeople should not be surprized to hear that some trainees had been sent home during the program.

Poverty and Its Causes

There was agreement among the symposium members that there were persons in the Valley who were poor. Many different views regarding the characteristics of poverty and its causes were expressed.

A number of speakers shared their personal experiences in attempting to alleviate individual poverty situations. Several had offered free building material and equipment to help poor persons they knew to improve their homes and living conditions. Others had arranged loans or interceded in other ways in behalf of the poor. Some poor persons respond encouragingly when opportunities for self-improvement are made available to them. Others seem not to care. If they move into a good home, it will be run down in less than a year. The poor appear to lack even the most basic knowledge of health and hygiene. Alcohol is frequently a problem. Illegitimacy and desertion are common.

It was agreed that frequently there was an absence of effective leadership among those persons who live in poverty. Those who are able do leave poverty, but they also leave the San Luis Valley to obtain jobs elsewhere. Those who remain frequently have low aspiration levels. But it was recognized that aspiration is not a psychological characteristic. The "desire for a better way of life" is learned. Aspiration levels tend to be very closely in line with what a person perceives as possible. For many poor persons with little or no education the aspiration to a full-time, well-paid job would be most unrealistic. The children of such persons are unlikely to experience a life situation which would make them see such a job as possible either. Low educational levels and lack of basic vocational skills are strong barriers to individual improvement. A focus on educational problems beginning with such programs as "Operation Head Start" promises to increase aspiration levels of the poor.

Many additional characteristics of poverty people were discussed. It was recognized that Spanish-Americans have a greater representation in the poverty sector than their proportionate part of the Valley's population. This was seen as a quirk of history. There was strong agreement that poverty problems are not limited to any one racial or ethnic group in the San Luis Valley.

Economy of the San Luis Valley

As one professional economist in the employ of a farmer reported, the San Luis Valley is predominantly an agricultural region with three important cash crops -- potatoes, barley, and lettuce. Farm prices for these commodities vary greatly and are not controlled by the farmer. Cattlemen are now having difficulties because of low prices, and the price on sheep has dropped so low that sheep raising in the Valley is on the way out. Salaries are limited because farm prices are low. With automation in agriculture field labor jobs are on the decrease. Because of automation and competition, the small farmer is an institution of the past. At the present a farmer can't make a living on less than half a section (320 acres). He cannot hire more workers and he can't afford to pay those who work for him more than current wages. More jobs are needed in the Valley. Some kind of light manufacturing is needed to employ agricultural workers during the off season. Better training in special skills, particularly the mechanical trades, would provide some additional jobs on a year-round basis. If the economy of the Valley is to improve all sectors must rise together. Any program which serves to pit the interests of one group in the Valley against another will be rejected. Everyone must rise together.

There is Concern about Federal Participation

The role of the federal government and federal money was a cause of grave concern among symposium participants. In the Valley people like to do things for themselves. They are willing to participate in federal programs, but they wish to preserve local automony. Whenever Washington gets into a program local control is always lost. The bureaucracy and red tape lead to all kinds of inefficiency. Programs that are needed now are held up while people wait for Washington to act.

There is a fear that the poverty program is a political program designed to get votes rather than to help the poor. There is the further concern that if programs are inaugurated using government funds, the funds will be withdrawn at some future time and then taxes will have to be raised. Mill levies are too high already.

Loss of local control appears to be an automatic result of participating in federal programs. For instance, although 75% of the school boards across the nation were against federal aid to education, the bills were passed. This is apt to lead to a standardized curriculum and standardized texts it was asserted. Local people will no longer have anything to say about the education of their children.

Moreover, the feeling was expressed also that government programs don't discriminate. They don't encourage people to help themselves. Welfare programs and unemployment insurance are being given to people who ought to be working. There is the danger that the poverty program will make the poor more irresponsible.

A Different Way of Looking at Federal Funds

The University staff suggested that federal funds could be understood in another way. One of the historical problems that the West faced was that its raw materials were processed in the East. Wool from Wyoming sheep was sent to Massachusetts where, after it was spun into yarn and made into sweaters, it was returned to Wyoming for sale. The Wyoming rancher received a few cents a pound for the wool, but the product which returned sold for fifteen dollars per pound. The basic work accomplished on the raw materials, which increased its value to fifteen dollars, was done in the East. The salaries were paid in the East and that is where the money accumulated.

The same sort of thing was common in the field of education where the raw material was the college graduate. Colorado-educated engineers who went to work in Schenectady, New York paid their taxes in New York and, therefore, did not contribute to the direct cost of education in Colorado.

Thus, the nation faced a problem of moving money from where it was in the manufacturing East to where it was needed in the West.

This was a simple explanation of one of the reasons that many Western states still receive more from the federal government each year than its citizens pay in taxes. Money is taken from a place where it is and sent to the place where it is needed. An equalization program of this sort is a responsibility of the federal system since individual states cannot accomplish it.

Federal Money and the "War on Poverty"

The staff also offered its opinion about the Economic Opportunity Act. The War on Poverty is designed in part to deal with this same historical problem of reallocating money. It is very clear that where there is a poverty pocket, there is not any money. The nation cannot expect the county commissioners of an Appalachian county to levy taxes on the poor to raise the funds to help them out of poverty. The poor do not have the money.

At the same time the nation faces another problem. There is a limit to the number of hydrogen bombs and other armaments we need to guarantee our national defense. Yet a large sector of our economy is engaged in the production of material for the defense effort. In order to keep people productively employed, the nation has to transfer efforts from defense, where it is no longer required in the same amount as in the past, to another area where the work will continue to be a contribution to our economy. There is every reason to believe that the money which finances the War on Poverty will not come from new taxes. It will come from taxes that originally paid for defense activity that is no longer needed and it will be placed in counties where it is needed.

The War on Poverty and Local Control

The War on Poverty is not just another "give-a-way" program nor does it resemble W.P.A. or other depression programs. It is a new kind of program which is so designed that local control is absolutely assured. This is why the Community Action Program portion of the War on Poverty requires the creation of a local group to develop and approve all programs that request federal funds from Washington. In effect, Washington is saying to communities across the country: "Any program which the community can agree upon that is directed at solving a poverty problem in that community will be funded." If a community cannot reach agreement on the composition of a representative group to recommend programs, it is obvious that they cannot reach agreement on what the programs themselves should be.

Congress has recognized that the kinds of programs needed to do away with poverty in the San Luis Valley are apt to be quite different from those that are appropriate for Kansas City or Chicago. Each area must develop its own approaches. There is no way to accuse Washington of trying to take away local autonomy or initiative through the War on Poverty. Both local autonomy and initiative are essential elements of the War on Poverty.

The Organization of a Valley-Wide Community Action Program

A number of persons present at the symposium reported that they had been engaged in efforts to organize a Community Action Program uniting all six of the counties in the San Luis Valley. A question arose regarding the way in which the organizational efforts had begun. One person explained that he had received a letter inviting him to a meeting to discuss the possibilities of the CAP. He said that the group carefully considered the requirements for appropriate representation in the Valley and the kinds of technical information about economic problems and solutions which the Office of Economic Opportunity needs in order to approve project proposals.

It was reported that those who took part in the exploratory meeting agreed to proceed with the development of a six-county Community Action Program based on a planning or developmental grant request. It was said that the group chose this approach because they lacked the specific kinds of information that were needed to design programs which could solve poverty problems in the Valley. The planning grant would allow the Valley to employ several full-time persons to study problems, collect information, design proposals, and submit the designs to the CAP committee for consideration and approval.

The group was also advised that in order for the CAP committee to submit proposals in the name of the Valley it had to be endorsed as the official representative group of the Valley for Office of Economic Opportunity programs. This endorsement required obtaining the certification and approval of the various governmental units -- municipal and county -- which would be affected by the various projects. It was further asserted that the citizens who attended the meeting agreed to inform the city and county governments in their respective areas and obtain the necessary approval for the Community Action Program Committee.

Several government officials who were present at the symposium responded to this description of the Community Action Program organizational efforts. One official stated that he had never been contacted about who should represent his area on the CAP committee. He indicated that his governmental unit had not been kept informed and that the methods and objectives of the Community Action Program had never been made clear to him or to other representatives whose approval was required. His unit had been requested to endorse the planning grant proposal, but because of the absence of information about specific kinds of programs that would be developed, the representatives had been unable to give their endorsement.

Organizational Principles and the Community Action Program

The discussion then turned to the problems of governmental organization and possible approaches to the creation of a Community Action Group. The suggestion was made that initial organizational efforts had not realistically assessed the situation. In order for a Community Action Group to develop and administer poverty program proposals, it must be representative. This means that it must have the full approval and support of the governmental representatives elected by the people. The Community Action Committee must be composed of persons that the elected representatives can trust and in this case "trust" means control. It was asserted that if a valley-wide Community Action Committee is to come to exist, municipal and county governments must play the leading role in its development. The initial efforts had put the cart before the horse. County and municipal government could not be expected to give their approval to a group that they had no part in choosing, particularly since the scope of the War on Poverty is so great.

The suggestion was made that the governmental representatives should hold a meeting to which they invite an outside authority who can give them the information they desire on the Economic Opportunity Act. If they choose to support a Community Action Program for the San Luis Valley, they should select a committee of persons that they can trust. The nature of administrative control and other expectations should be made clear from the beginning and the CAP committee should be informed.

An Attack on Poverty is Underway

Although the Community Action Program was at least temporarily at a standstill, a number of different kinds of programs were described which indicated the interest of the people of the Valley in attacking core poverty problems. From state and federal sources demonstration projects in homemaking, nutrition,, and health practices were being activated through county welfare departments. These and other adult education programs which provide those in poverty with opportunities at self improvement promise to bring many worthwhile results.

Many communities have taken advantage of the preschool programs which provide special preparation for children of economically-deprived families. These programs are funded by the "Operation Head Start" section of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and it was stated that they were being well received by the communities.

It was pointed out that vocational training was available through the Colorado State Employment Service and through Vocational Rehabilitation. A number of persons from the Valley have participated in these programs and have obtained better jobs in the area as a consequence.

There was general agreement that more educational programs to improve literacy levels and vocational training to improve job skills were needed. If these kinds of activity could be the focus of the "War on Poverty" and an overall design for economic improvement for all people in the Valley could be undertaken, the Valley would be receptive to the benefits the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

IV.

Execution of the Program

The University's VISTA training proposal was designed to produce VISTA volunteers who were generalists acquainted with the widest possible variety of problems faced by the migrant and the seasonally-unemployed agricultural worker. Emphasis was placed on learning about resources and how to develop successful strategies for their employment rather than on specific solutions or treatment of poverty problems.

The decision to provide generalist training was based on our knowledge of rural poverty in a section of the Southwest. While it may be that the problems of poverty become immediately evident to anyone who is willing to open his eyes, the solutions to poverty problems in rural communities require the support or, at least, tolerance of the community's decision-makers and opinion leaders. Frontal attacks on poverty by persons who are new in town will inevitably be regarded with distrust or outright hostility. The cardinal principle to be remembered in such a situation is: "You can't get there from here -- directly." The volunteer who wishes to develop a program for retarded children may well find that the process involves helping the Chamber of Commerce to organize a United Fund drive. Since the VISTA will be in the community for less than a year, he may never see the program he helped to begin. A generalist will be able to take advantage of opportunities to help the poor wherever and whenever they appear. A specialist will experience nothing but anger and frustration at the refusal of the community to accept his services in the way he wishes to offer them.

Two of the three components of the training program incorporating this concept are described on the following pages -- classroom lecture-demonstrations and field training experiences. The third component involved the use of staff supervisors. The staff supervisors related to trainees in two different kinds of group situation. Each of the eight field experiences was designed and controlled by a staff supervisor. He prepared the trainees in groups of seven or eight to enter the field. He remained with them while they moved about the Valley, and he de-briefed them when they returned at the end of the day. All trainees rotated through the same field experiences. In this way all supervisors had the opportunity to observe each trainee in a field situation.

In addition to the field training groups, each supervisor had a group of from seven to ten trainees assigned to him for the duration of the program. These groups met on a daily basis, generally in the evening following lectures which the supervisors also attended. Their purpose was to integrate the lecture and demonstration content of the program with practical field experience through discussion. Further, these groups provided daily feedback through the supervisors to the senior staff for planning purposes. The entire staff was available to all trainees on an around-the-clock basis if individual consultation of a personal nature was desired.

As is evident from this description, staff supervisors carried a heavy burden in the operation of the training program. Their average work day was eighteen hours, and they stayed with the trainees day for day throughout both training programs.

Staff meetings were conducted frequently throughout all phases of the project -- usually each day and at least every other day. Although the general schedule was planned in advance, it was changed from day to day to take full advantage of spontaneous developments in the community or among the trainees themselves. Trainees were never permitted to know what was to occur in the program more than one day ahead. This approach was used to teach the important lesson that, while strategies should be consistent and long range, tactics should be flexible to take advantage of the unexpected. In the vernacular of the project, trainees were taught to take advantage of "accidents." A break in an irrigation dike, a fire in a house, a windstorm, an unfortunate rumor about a trainee -- all could be turned quickly to an advance for the War on Poverty.

In summary, the training project was designed to break away from the eight-to-five bureaucratic ritual of university classes or the helping service agencies. Since learning can occur at any time in a responsive environment, the members of the staff were responsible to teach at any time it was possible, which meant anytime that the trainees were awake.

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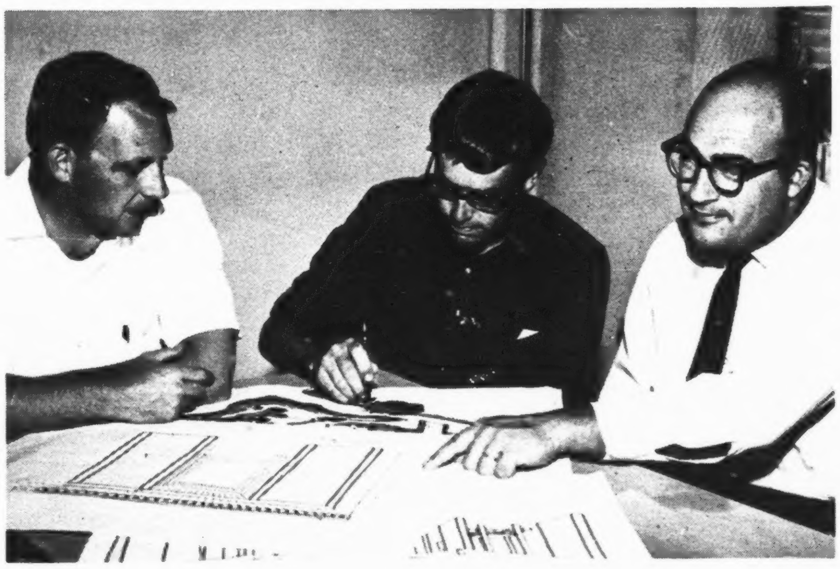
MONTE VISTA PROJECT STAFF

Left to right: Randall Lortscher, Robert Hunter, Betty Brandenburg, Patrick Jobes, William T. Adams, Richard Vandiver, Timothy Findley, Reyes Ramos, Alice Higman, and Howard Higman.



Robert Hughes,
Stuart Matlack
and
James Selkin

Cooperating Agencies

- Colorado State Department of Welfare
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- Colorado State Department of Employment
  - Special Services Supervisor: Carl Haberl
- Colorado State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Twelfth Judicial District Court of Colorado
  - Judge George H. Blickhahn, Sr.
- Alamosa County Court
  - Judge George H. Blickhahn, Jr.
- City of Monte Vista
  - City Manager: Ronald Isky
- Monte Vista Public Schools
  - Superintendent: Ralph Baldwin
- Colorado State Veterans Center
  - Superintendent: John Daley
- Alamosa County and San Luis Valley Migratory
  - Public Health Nurse: Mabel Gilmore, RN
- Saguache County Public Health Nurse
  - Sally Murray, RN
- Conejos County Public Health Nurse
  - Sally Roybal, RN
- Denver County Public Welfare Department
  - Director: Bernard Valdez
- Alamosa County Public Welfare Department
  - Director: Leland McDaniel
- Rio Grande County Public Welfare Department
  - Director: Robert Beals
- Saguache County Public Welfare Department
  - Director: Glenn Coleman
- Alamosa County Sheriff's Office
  - Sheriff: Ben Phillips
- Costilla County Sheriff's Office
  - Sheriff: Reuben Navarro
- Monte Vista Police Department
  - Chief of Police: Andrew Hull
- United States Government Forest Service

Colorado I
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Week Of	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
8:30 AM June 20 - June 26 2:00 PM 7:30 PM	REGISTRATION INTRODUCTION TO VISTA Brigham Madsen VISTA AT WORK Les Thomas Maggie Tweeton-Nora Whitlock	LOOKING GLASS SELF EVER ONWARD AND UPWARD John Hutchison FIEDLER ON THE ROOF (tape) VISTA's VISTA OF MONTE VISTA Reyes Ramos	MOVE TO MONTE VISTA, COLORADO SARTRE'S DILEMMA John Hutchison
8:30 AM June 27 - July 3 7:30 PM 7:30 PM	FREE DAY	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM CULTURE: THE WAY IT WAS COLLISION OF CULTURES Clark Knowlton INTERVIEW Clark Knowlton Basic Instructors
8:30 AM July 4 - July 10 2:00 PM 7:30 PM	FREE DAY	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM PUBLIC HEALTH William Bradley Mabel Gilmore	PLACEMENTS THE RIVER (film)
8:30 AM July 11 - July 17 2:00 PM 7:30 PM	CHANGE: HOW TO GO ABOUT IT E. K. Nelson POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTION E. K. Nelson	PLACEMENTS THE PLACE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE COMMUNITY E. K. Nelson CREATIVE USES OF PUBLIC ADMIN. IN RURAL COMMUNITIES E. K. Nelson	PLACEMENTS EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN AND WITHOUT Tom Bell-Rudy Sanfilippo THE WAR ON POVERTY: THE OFFICE OF ECON. OPPORTUNITY Brigham Madsen
8:30 AM July 18 - July 24 2:00 PM 7:30 PM	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Paul Ries FISHING ON LARIMER STREET Paul Ries	CASE HISTORY OF AN INSTITUTION IN A RURAL AREA John Daley GERIATRICS R. H. Dovenmuehle OPERATION ELBOW ROOM	PLACEMENTS STATE GOVERNMENT -- CONFLICTS AND PROSPECTS Elton McQuery (Part II) Elton McQuery
8:30 AM July 25 - July 30 2:00 PM 7:30 PM	SEMANTIC ANALYSIS MINORITIES IN CITIES Rudolph Gonzales	TRIAL BALLOON (Part II) JUVENILES, THE COURTS, AND POVERTY Ted Rubin	SLAVE MARKET FIELD OBSERVATIONS I AM GOING TO LEARN TO READ AND WRITE Irving Branman

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
THE VALLEY Gil Baxter-Ray Lyons SPANISH-AMERICANS IN THE SAN LUIS VALLEY William Oba MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS	TOUR OF THE VALLEY SYMPOSIUM HARVEST OF SHAME (film)	THE OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE O. J. Harvey (Part II) O. J. Harvey INDUSTRY IN THE VALLEY Headlee Wright	ATTITUDE CHANGE O. J. Harvey (Part II) O. J. Harvey RAMOS REVISITED Reyes Ramos
OPERATION ELBOW ROOM TECHNIQUES Clark Knowlton THE STRUCTURE OF RURAL COMMUNITY SERVICES George Gliva	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM DEPRIVATION--BEING ALONE AND UNABLE Tom Adams - George Gliva ROLE PLAYING Tom Adams - George Gliva	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM MIRRORS IN BACK ROOMS Tom Adams THE FEED FORWARD Tom Adams	EXPANDING THE OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE WITHIN AND WITHOUT Tom Adams (Part II) Tom Adams
PLACEMENTS CHUCK WAGON SUPPER	PLACEMENTS RODEO MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS	PLACEMENTS WAYS OUT OF POVERTY Dorothy Sherman THE QUIET ONE Dorothy Sherman	MOTIVATION FOR THE DISENCHANTED Dorothy Sherman USING THE SKILLS OF INCLUSION Dorothy Sherman
PLACEMENTS THE VICISSITUDES OF AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE Tom Bell - Rudy Sanfilippo LEARNING TO SURVIVE Tom Bell - Rudy Sanfilippo	PLACEMENTS DON'T SPIT, SIT, OR LIE ON THE FLOOR Paul Jacobs THE BRUTALIZATION OF AMERICA Paul Jacobs	PLACEMENTS THE MIGRANT WORKER Gabino Rendone	PLACEMENTS HOUSING THE MIGRANT WORKER Thomas Ford
PLACEMENTS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION Howard Higman	PLACEMENTS MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS	PLACEMENTS FIESTA	MOVE TO DENVER, COLORADO
MAKING OUT IN THE CITY Robert Hanson (Part II) Robert Hanson I AM GOING TO LEARN TO READ AND WRITE (Part II) Irving Branman	LOOKING GLASS SELF THE LAW AND POVERTY Walter Gerash BUREAUCRACY -- THE TOP AND BOTTOM Daniel Hoffman	RESEARCH GRADUATION Joseph Smiley Edgar May BANQUET	

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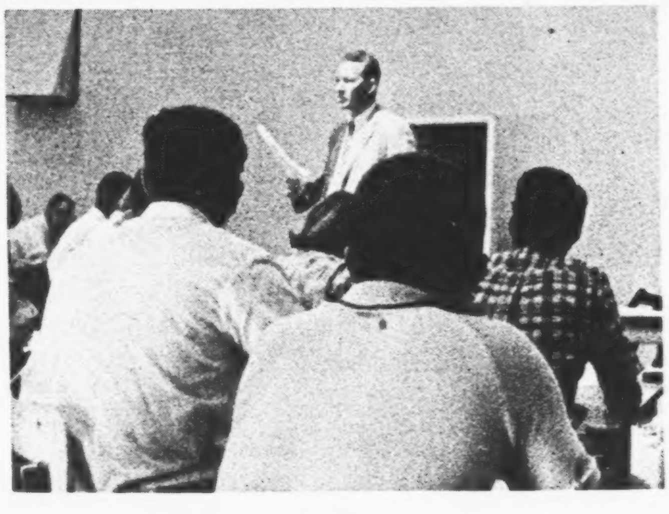
Week of		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
August 1 - August 7	8:30 AM		LOOKING GLASS SELF HABERDASHERY Phil Trapp	MOVE TO MONTE VISTA, COLORADO
	2:00 PM	REGISTRATION	SEMANTIC ANALYSIS Brigham Madsen	
	7:30 PM		VISTA'S VISTA OF MONTE VISTA Carl Hollander	FIEDLER ON THE ROOF (tape)
August 8 - August 14	8:30 AM	ROBBER'S CAVE O. J. Harvey	PLACEMENTS	PLACEMENTS
	2:00 PM	MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS		
	7:30 PM	ROBBER's CAVE (Part II) O. J. Harvey	THE VALLEY Cecil Frutchey	TO BE OR NOT TO BE Howard Higman
August 15 - August 21	8:30 AM	CULTURE, DELINQUENCY, AND CONFLICT IN RURAL AREAS William Meredith	PLACEMENTS	PLACEMENTS
	2:00 PM			
	7:30 PM	I AM GOING TO LEARN TO READ AND WRITE Irving Branman	I AM GOING TO LEARN TO READ AND WRITE (Part II) Irving Branman	THE QUIET ONE - THE RIVER (films)
August 22 - August 28	8:30 AM		OPERATION ELBOW ROOM	PLACEMENTS
	2:00 PM	THE DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE Bernard Valdez		THE VICISSITUDES OF AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE Tom Bell MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS
	7:30 PM	LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE Rudy Sanfilippo	LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (Part II) Rudy Sanfilippo	LEARNING TO SURVIVE Tom Bell
August 29 - Sept. 4	8:30AM		OPERATION ELBOW ROOM	PLACEMENTS
	2:00PM	THE MORAL AMERICAN Richard Wilson	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION Howard Higman MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS	THE LAW AND POVERTY Jim Carrigan MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS
	7:30 PM	(Part II) Richard Wilson	HOUSING THE MIGRANT WORKER Otis Brown	THE LAW AND POVERTY (Part II) Jim Carrigan
Sept. 5 - Sept. 10	8:30AM		TRIAL BALLOON (Part II)	SLAVE MARKET PENITENTES
	2:00 PM	TRIAL BALLOON	LIVING IN TREES David Hawkins MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS	FROM THE COUNTRY TO THE CITY Tom Adams-Basic Instructors LABOR AND THE POOR Herrick Roth
	7:30 PM	MINORITIES IN CITIES Rudolph Gonzales	NOISY CLASSROOMS Francis Hawkins	BUREAUCRACY--TOP AND BOTTOM Daniel Hoffman



Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
OPERATION PAUL BUNYAN OPERATION RECREATION GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE SAN LUIS VALLEY Luis Medina	TOUR OF THE VALLEY PROCESS OF ACCULTURATION Luis Medina	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM THE HARVEST OF SHAME (film)	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM THE OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE O. J. Harvey MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS ATTITUDE CHANGE O. J. Harvey
PLACEMENTS COLLISION OF CULTURES Clark Knowlton MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS TECHNIQUES Clark Knowlton	PLACEMENTS DEPRIVATION: BEING ALONE AND UNABLE Tom Adams (Part II) Tom Adams	PLACEMENTS MIRRORS IN BACK ROOMS Tom Adams-Basic Instructors MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE DIRECTLY George Gliva	WAYS OUT Tom Adams-Basic Instructors REWEAVING THE SOCIAL FABRIC Tom Adams CULTURE, DELINQUENCY, AND CONFLICT IN RURAL AREAS William Meredith
PLACEMENTS THE POVERTY PROGRAM AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY Reuben Zubrow MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS (Part II) Reuben Zubrow	PLACEMENTS THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY Brigham Madsen	PLACEMENTS GHETTOS Sam Rosenberg	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM GHETTOS (Part II) Sam Rosenberg
PLACEMENTS THE PUBLIC AND THE POVERTY PROGRAM Larry Weiss MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS (Part II) Larry Weiss	PLACEMENTS THE USES AND MISUSES OF SMALL GROUP PROCESSES Edward Steinberg MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS HEALTH AND HOUSING William Taylor	PLACEMENTS THE USES AND MISUSES OF SMALL GROUP PROCESSES (II) Edward Steinberg MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS CHILDREN ARE RATHER EASILY COME BY - William Bradley	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM TOWARD THE SKY THERE ARE NO FENCES Edward Steinberg
PLACEMENTS MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISORS	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION Leslie Hitchcock	OPERATION ELBOW ROOM VISTA! Velma Linford	MOVE TO DENVER, COLORADO
LOOKING GLASS SELF FISHING ON LARIMER STREET James Hicks JUVENILES, THE COURTS, AND POVERTY Ted Rubin	KATABASIS SEMINAR IN GROUP STRUCTURES Tom Adams-Basic Instructors (Part II) Tom Adams-Basic Instructors	RESEARCH GRADUATION Glenn Barnett Robert Stearns BANQUET	

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Basic Instructors in Monte Vista

A great deal is learned when the situation in which that learning is to take place includes a variety of ingredients. To tell people in training about the poor and their problems and prospects is ineffective if given second-hand through lectures. Because of this assumption, the VISTA training included the use of basic instructors. They were selected from the members of the community called Lariat, which has been previously described. Basic Instructors were chosen from Aid to Dependent Children mothers, young persons who were unemployed and out of school, men who were representative of success and failure in their community, and other spokesmen for Lariat. Most Basic Instructors in the VISTA training program came from racial and ethnic minorities.

When they were hired, they were told they would be teachers for the VISTA training. They were paid for their teaching. They were selected by VISTA staff who worked in Lariat supervising the trainees.

In the interviews, the basic instructors were encouraged to talk freely. After the formal interview in which the interviewer and Basic Instructors did a type of team teaching, the VISTA's were encouraged to ask questions and participate.

After the Basic Instructors left, the interviewer analyzed the sessions. He pointed out the significance of the content, the interview process, the points of insight, resistance, threat, and the need for support. The VISTA's were struck by the fact that they had rarely, if ever, communicated meaningfully with persons from poverty and disadvantage.

Interviews were both individual and group type. Several of the faculty in the training program used the basic instructor technique.

The Content of the Interviews

While a large part of the interview did focus on revealing feelings and personal information about the basic instructors themselves, an even larger part was included on general reactions to such things as poverty, unemployment, the community, minority status, welfare, deviancy, and education. They talked about the rural areas and about their very limited opportunity system.

They talked about themselves -- their lives, hopes, and despairs.

In so doing, the interviewer was careful to guarantee that their privacy was not violated. They were told to stop if anything became painful.

In many cases, after the basic instructors had talked, the VISTA's would see them again frequently in their daily contacts and field experiences in Lariat. A continuing interest, concern, and support followed from the interviews.

The following excerpt from an interview points up what has just been said. This interview involved two women from Lariat: a mother and her daughter. The mother had come from the hospital only that morning after a two-week illness. Both women had large families, were often on welfare, were anxious to be teachers, and taught the volunteers a great deal.

Adams: Do you want to talk a little bit about the difference between the summers here and the winters?

Mrs. Chavez: It starts getting a little cold after it freezes, sometime in October; and it starts getting colder and colder, but it doesn't really get cold until November -- then December, January, February. This weather we have til about May or June. In the wintertime the kids have to walk to school, and it's hard for the big ones to have to walk a long way to high school. The little kids have to walk through the snow. It's real hard for them to have to walk so far to school. And the water -- it's hard if you don't have a well. A lot of us don't. It gets hard on us to have to chop wood and buy coal.

Adams: How do you heat your homes? What do you use?

Mrs. Chavez: I have a stove that's wood and coal. For the wintertime I have a kerosene burner -- oil heat.

Adams: Does it get the room warm?

Mrs. Chavez: Just one room. I have it in my room, so in the morning when we all get up I can't get the kitchen warm enough for the kids to come and eat breakfast.

Adams: Do they ever talk about the cold?

Mrs. Chavez: They don't like the winter.

Adams: When they talk about the winters, what do they say?

Mrs. Chavez: What they say most is that they should have school in summer so that in winter they wouldn't have to go because of the cold.

Adams: How long does it take them to walk from your house to school?

Mrs. Chavez: About twenty minutes, and if they walk slowly, about half an hour.

Adams: Do they get warm food at school?

Mrs. Chavez: No. They have to walk back and forth at noon.

Adams: So they go twice then?

Mrs. Chavez: But when it got too cold I asked if they had to walk two times in the cold. . . .

Adams: That was your young kids? What about the high school?

Mrs. Chavez: No. Well, I have a girl that works. She gets free lunch -- the others have to walk home.

Adams: They have to walk? There's no school lunch program in the high school?

Mrs. Chavez: There is, but they have to pay $1.50 a week. We can afford it sometimes, but not always.

Adams: Do your children get hot lunches?

Mrs. Martinez: Because my husband works in the wintertime more steady than in the summer, I used to give them money to eat in school. About two months before school ended I didn't have any money to give them to buy their lunch, so I sent a note and I asked them if they could have free lunch. And they gave them free lunch til the end of school. But Virginia, when I had the money to give her, she could eat in high school. Then at the end when I didn't have any money because the cellars had closed, she had to walk home.

Adams: When you say that the men work in the cellars, what does that mean? What do they do?

Mrs. Martinez: They have different kinds of jobs. Some of them empty the sacks and pick them up from the floor and weigh them, mostly sorting them. They have women there to sort the potatoes, and then the men have to -- when the sacks get full -- take them out of there, pile them up. . . .

Adams: Is that about the only kind of job you can get around here in the winter?

Mrs. Martinez: Mostly -- unless you are a construction worker.

Adams: Do the children seem to have colds a lot in the winter?

Mrs. Martinez: We pile them up with sweaters. We put on a whole bunch of sweaters -- sometimes two pair of pants. We have this outside pump, and they freeze. Even some of our neighbors that have water in the house, their pipes freeze so we have to find some way of heating the water, because not all the wells freeze.

Mrs. Chavez: That's what caused my father-in-law's death. The well froze and he made a fire inside a little house, and he got smoke up his lungs -- and I don't know what happened. He didn't die then, but he began to feel sick, and we took him to the doctor, and he said that had caused it. That had brought on his sickness. He had inhaled too much smoke. Since he was so old, he said that his lungs couldn't take it.

Mrs. Martinez: You have to wait sometimes three days for the clothes to dry and the stove that we have makes so much smoke, we can't take the clothes inside to dry because of the soot from the stove. When we put them by the fire it smokes a lot.

Adams: How do you get your fire started in the morning?

Mrs. Martinez: I use paper, boxes, or kerosene, or coal oil.

Adams: You put a little of that on your fires to get them started?

Mrs. Chavez: First, I put some cardboard -- a little bit of wood -- and light a match -- and hope it lights.

Mrs. Martinez: I use coal oil.

Adams: That's a little dangerous, isn't it?

Mrs. Chavez: I used to use it until my sister got burned once. I had it in a coal oil can and one of the girls was going to light the fire. It blew out the whole bottom when she got near the stove.

Adams: But she put the fire out? Did any of your kids ever drink coal oil by mistake -- thinking it was water?

Mrs. Chavez: My little grandson -- he did.

Adams: What did you do to help when that happened?

Mrs. Chavez: Well, he was kind of choking, so we gave him some warm water. He could get pneumonia.

Adams: There are so many things you have to worry about like that, aren't there? How do they feel about not having any chance to be alone -- to have any privacy?

Mrs. Chavez: I have two boys. Tommy has to wait. We have four rooms, but in the winter we go into one room in the morning, and he has to wait until all the girls are gone. He wouldn't get up, and their friends come in the morning to pick them up, and he gets real mad sometimes. And sometimes the girls want to dress, and they say, "we don't want to dress when Tommy's there."

Adams: Are your children beginning to feel this now?

Mrs. Martinez: Virginia, she goes to her grandma's to get dressed because my sister-in-law and my mother-in-law live in a house by themselves. Since my girl goes to sleep over there, she takes some of her clothes there and gets dressed so to have a little bit of privacy because otherwise she can't.

Adams: When you were growing up, did you have a chance to have any privacy or not?

Mrs. Martinez: Well, I think we had more than my daughters have because at that time my brothers and sisters were real small and it wasn't so hard.

Adams: Who gets up first in the morning?

Mrs. Martinez: At home I do. Our husbands don't like to chop wood so we have to get up and chop wood. They say that because they work so hard, it's up to us to chop wood. But not all the husbands feel that way. Just some of them. So I have to get up and chop wood, and make the fire in the stove, and bring some water, and start the day. It's kind of hard, especially in the winter when it's cold. In the summer you don't mind it too much.

Adams: Summer is a lot better for you, then? Do you think you feel better? Do you not get as depressed in the summer? Does the winter sort of add to this?

Mrs. Martinez: I like winter because my kids go to school, and then when I stay home I clean up the house and everything. I don't feel so depressed in winter as in summer because in summer when I look outside, it's so sunny and real pretty, and then inside the house is so dark and gloomy, and I feel worse. I tell my sister sometimes, "In summer it's worse because you wish that your home wouldn't be like this -- that you could enjoy the day. But in summer you can't even enjoy it because you look at your house and it's so messy and everything." In the winter I don't feel like that -- so depressed.

Adams: In the winter it's dark outside, too?

Mrs. Chavez: My brother came from California in January, It was real cold then. He was always going to bring his kids in the wintertime, so they could see the snow here. They had never seen snow. They wanted to come and see it, so he promised he was going to bring them in the wintertime, but now that he was here, he said, "I'm going to tell the kids I'm going to break that promise because I won't bring them here to freeze. It's so cold here I won't bring them anymore." And my niece came. She's married, and has a little boy, and it was snowing one day. He just stayed at the window watching the snow.

Adams: To see it once in a while is all right, but to live in it and to deal with it is something else?

Mrs. Chavez: My brother said, "I didn't realize it was so cold here."

As is evident from this interview excerpt, the students listened, reflected, and formed new lines of communication and identification to their future associates in the VISTA program. They heard things rarely heard before. These dialogues added immediate reality to the academic content of lectures given during the formal seminars.

Time and again as can be seen from these excerpts, the basic instructors said in their language, with feeling, the same thing espoused as theory by a lecturer.

The next excerpt came from an interview with a young man who had struggled and succeeded in the community. He is articulate, bright, and forthright. He works as the custodian of the high school and is a part-time policeman (recently hired). Mr. Garcia said many things. Here are a few:

Adams: When you said you had the feeling that some of them did this because they wanted to get away from their families, could you talk a little more about that?

Garcia: I can't even remember who it was, but this was said during a conversation. I even believe it was down at Taylor's Tavern. This kid -- the only reason he had got into trouble was because he wanted to get away from his family. His parents were at each other's throats, and when they couldn't get there they picked on the kids. This, I too, think would have made me leave, but he said that he got into some trouble so he could be sent somewhere he could go and more or less think this out and try to see what his folks were doing.

Adams: He talked with you about this -- in this way?

Garcia: Yes. Well, I noticed he was always out in the streets until twelve or twelve-thirty. Everything was all shut down. And this was evening after evening. I was a bartender down at the tavern and I noticed him coming in all the time. Once in a while he wouldn't even have any money or anything, so I'd open up a pop for him, and set it there, and we'd start talking. In the wintertime there wasn't hardly any customers so I had plenty of time to talk to him. Then I started teaching him to play checkers and some of this stuff. Then I'd try to get a pencil and paper and just do stuff that would require him to do a little thinking, and he started shaping up a little bit, and he's doing okay now. Oh, his manner of speaking and acting is still the same, but I think he has a different outlook.

Adams: You mean a different feeling inside about himself, maybe? When you were talking with him, could you feel with him the kind of things he was talking about?

Garcia: Yes, because I have seen them. I know what they're like. If a father comes home drunk in the middle of the night and scatters the family all over town, well, that doesn't stand too good in anybody's book. And this is continued time after time -- not only getting kicked out but actually getting beaten. You're going to stay out of the home as long as possible til you can come and go to sleep without any trouble.

Adams: What do the women do in this?

Garcia: Well, the way I think about it is some of the women contribute to some of this. I don't say all of them do, but knowing women -- they're right in the midst of it anyway. They contribute to this to an extent when they don't try to straighten out their house and they don't prepare a meal or have a kid washed up. Then an argument could start, the father go out and get a bottle and come back and do what they do to their family.

Adams: Do you think some of them have just given up?

Garcia: Some of them have to an extent. Well, they do hold their heads up, but there's something you notice that is lacking -- that isn't there.

Adams: Do you think they don't feel good about themselves?

Garcia: Yes, I do think so, because working there at the bar they come in and cry on my shoulder once in a while. And living there in Lariat and knowing the conditions that do exist there, I could feel and I did feel what they were up against.

Adams: When you were still working in the bar and they came there, what did they talk about?

Garcia: Oh, they'd start out real mad. They'd start tearing their wives down and I'd move out of the way and let them chat for a while with themselves. Then I'd come back and change the subject. I'd say, "Where are you working now?" or "Work hard today?" Pretty soon I'd get them relaxed where they could talk freely and not use all the language they were before.

Adams: When they came in they were pretty mad. And what about the women? What did they talk about?

Garcia: Oh, the women -- they'd think their husband was no good -- always drunk. That he mistreats them and beats them up and beats up the kids. I'd turn around and ask if they had done anything to encourage this, and they say, "No, no." "What are you doing right now?" "Trying to forget everything." "That's just going to create more problems -- the way I look at it." So I talk to some of them like that, but especially when they're drinking you can't talk to them very freely like you can a man, because even if a woman is drunk, you know, one look and -- Pow! I can't get through to the women like I do the men.

Adams: Did it bother you to see the women come in like that?

Garcia: At first, yes, it did. Because in our families the women never drank. Of course, now everything's changed. My mother never drank. Oh, she had a beer or two -- not a whole lot -- once in a while for a special occasion -- a christening or something like this, she would have one. My father, as far as I can remember, I've only seen him drunk once. That was when I was about eight years old. That had a very good impression on me because even up to now all the other kids fight with their fathers. They get drunk together and they fight, which I can't see. But getting back to the point that women do contribute some to this that goes on -- yet again, you can't be the judge. Because, actually, if you don't see the whole thing, I don't think a person can judge by just pieces here and there. I think a person has to be present since it began to really evaluate the thing, and get down to actually what really is happening.

Adams: You said something that struck me. You said it's all changed now. What did you mean?

Garcia: Well, what I mean is that women are drinking more now than they used to. Women are working more now, and they're driving automobiles, and this and that, which was primarily the role of the male. Now women are practically holding down any job. They drive a car just as good as a man does and, therefore, they're taking up drinking just as men do.

Adams: Do you think they are assuming more responsibility in the family?

Garcia: Well, maybe not in the family, but in the outside world they are. I know several families that both men and women work, and they seem to get along pretty good. Of course, whenever there's a hassle there's a big one. It's nothing small like it would be otherwise. He comes out with, "Why aren't the kids clean?" or something and she says, "Well, I've been working." And you have this friction because of the work involved. Because she is working and neglecting her responsibilities in the home, she would answer, "Why don't you help once in a while? I'm helping you." This I find has worked out where the husband and wife come home from work and share equally the routine work of the house -- where maybe he would do the dishes or put up a bed or stuff like this in the home that he generally wouldn't do.

Adams: Does your wife work?

Garcia: No.

Adams: Would you want her to?

Garcia: No.

Adams: We read a lot and we talk a lot about the Spanish-American culture. You know, that the man is the head of the house and the woman is expected to do certain things in the house. What you're talking about is that there has been a change?

Garcia: Yes.

Adams: How do you feel about this change?

Garcia: This change -- I think it had to happen. Otherwise, still looking at it from the aspect of living there in Lariat, I don't think if there's no more income than there has been coming in, the situation there is just going to linger and linger til somebody else picks it up. I think if husband and wife do work and can get along good and work towards one goal of maybe bettering themselves or getting out of there, I think this is a great change.

Adams: And this is for the good, even if it's going to change things in the family?

Garcia: Well, yes. Because if the change doesn't go through and the husband can't provide enough to get out of there, it's just going to be an endless pit. They'll never get out.

Adams: Did the women do this themselves? Were they the ones who put this over or did the men encourage them to?

Garcia: I don't know how it came about. My sister, for example, came out and said she was going to go to work, and she did. During the winter she works in the potato warehouse with my brother-in-law and she brings home just as much today as he does. But here again I see this ill-feeling that whenever there's some disagreement, my sister will bring out, "Well, I bought this." And my brother-in-law will say, "What about all the other stuff that I bought before you were working?" They will come at it again and my sister will threaten she's not going to work anymore. My brother-in-law will say, "Fine. Good. Stay home and do your work." Then she will say, "If you'd help me once in a while. . . ." You have all this going back and forth.

Adams: When you know that the change -- the fact that the women are taking this new step upward -- and you said that it had to come because of Lariat -- because of the fact that the people had nothing coming into the community -- what does it do about the relationship between parents and their children?

Garcia: Well, I think this won't change very much. Maybe it will change for the better because even the husband will realize to a great extent that they're going to work and be gone all day, and they do want to spend some time with the children -- any chance they get. I know that I myself for one haven't spent much time with my family lately. But any chance I do get, even on my night off, I spend with them. I try to go to the drive-in or just stay home with the whole family.

Adams: It bothers you, doesn't it being away so much?

Garcia: It does. I think that the wife, too, will come home, and she'll do more, and she'll do it in a way that's different. To some women, I think, their housework is a drag. They go through it, but it's the same old thing. But if they come home from work and start getting supper ready, and their husbands will go out and start doing something else to help -- maybe he'll go visit with the kids while mom's getting supper ready and she'll go visit with the kids while maybe he'll do the dishes -- it gets to be more and more a share-and-share-alike deal. More, maybe, than the husband's responsibility to bring home the pay and the woman's responsibility to take care of the kids and family, now it's being more joined by both.

Adams: Do you know places where this hasn't happened yet? Are there other places in which Spanish-American families live where this is not the case?

Garcia Yes. But here again we don't even have enough employment for the male population, much less the female.

Adams: What about the young girls who grow up in the family? Are things changing for them?

Garcia: Yes, I think so. I think that when they get married they will expect to work.

Adams: What about before they get married? Do the fathers treat them differently now than they used to?

Garcia: Yes, I think they've got a more loose rein than they did years ago. Years ago I know that the males could be more on their own than the females could. I know that if one of my sisters came home later than ten o'clock, she wouldn't go out for several weeks -- and she'd get a beating to boot. I know if I stayed over ten-thirty or twelve, or whatever it was, I'd get a scolding. But my privileges wouldn't be taken away.

Adams: It was expected you might do this? How else is it changing with the girls?

Garcia: Well, the girls go out on dates and generally the time they're expected to be back home is twelve o'clock, or maybe the time the drive-in or something will be over. But it is changing to an extent where the parent has slacked quite a bit in bringing up the children.

Adams: Do you think you will be this way as a father?

Garcia: I hope not. I feel that I was always controlled to an extent. Of course, they didn't know what was going on behind their backs. And I won't either, but I think that if I bring up my kids the way I was brought up that I won't have anything to worry about.

Adams: So you want to continue. But what kind of conflict does this throw you in? You see the world around you changing and you want to continue. How do you deal with this?

Garcia: Well, I say to myself, "I've only got one family to take care of. I'll take care of it in the way I feel in the best interest of all of us. Whatever anybody else wants to do with their family is one of their privileges." I have this feeling, but here again I don't think I object to the way that. . . . I understand it. . . . I object. . . . but I know it's there.

From the basic instructors, the content, theories, and feelings came to life for the volunteer trainees. In their future assignments they would have these encounters with the disadvantaged. The VISTA's listened, learned, and were anxious to move on to real contacts in the exciting world ahead.

Monte Vista Field Training Experience

The eight field training experiences described in words and photographs on the following pages were under the direct control of the permanent staff supervisors. Prior to the arrival of trainees, the supervisors had visited the San Luis Valley to make contacts with public health and welfare departments, law enforcement agencies, and Spanish-Americans living in Lariat and other communities. Each staff member was given wide latitude in developing his area of training. This was essential for resources were too scarce to permit the standard form of field placement used in training caseworkers or criminology students in the agencies of a metropolitan area. All field experiences placed VISTA trainees in direct contact with persons living in poverty, which meant that from time to time risks had to be taken. There was always the danger that inexpert persons would err -- that someone would be offended. These were risks that the field supervisors were instructed to take. If trainees were to make mistakes, we wanted them to be made in the Valley where they could be used to illustrate correct approaches. Supervisors were instructed not to confine themselves to rigid schedules or patterns based on the recognition that the unexpected often occurs when one leaves the controlled environment of the classroom. Full advantage was to be taken of any spontaneous event that could be turned into a learning experience for the VISTA trainees.

Most field placements lasted two days. For each content area, however, many of the experiences were complementary. For example, the welfare placement, which provided trainees with insights into agency procedures, dealt with the same persons trainees met as basic instructors in the classroom. In homemaking trainees visited the homes of the same persons with whom they had become acquainted in both settings. The preschool program gave trainees an opportunity to observe and work with the children who were a product of these homes. Public health field work brought additional contact from yet a different perspective.

Since staff supervisors also attended classroom lectures it was possible to tie the various experiences together -- to point out the events that classroom theory explained and to augment classroom lectures with illustrations found in the field the preceding day.

Migrant Camps and Sanitation

Supervisor: Timothy Findley

On sanitation placement, trainees were exposed to sights and smells which forcefully illustrated the dilemma of the lives of migrant laborers. The placement required extensive mobility as migrants are distributed in small groups throughout the entire valley. During the day practical problems of migrant life were introduced by basic instruction on wells, pumps, outhouses, sewage, and housing. They learned regulations and requirements to meet sanitary standards, saw problems which they are likely to encounter on placement, and learned how to improve existing conditions. The trainees visited both occupied and unoccupied camps accompanied by sanitation officers. They talked with migrants and growers. They asked questions while inspecting the camps, and problems and advantages were discussed. They were required literally to look beneath the surface; test wells; and inspect outhouses, food storage sheds -- in fact, all aspects of living conditions in a migrant camp. The second half of the placement illustrated the problem of the invisible poor. Trainees were put on their own to find the migrant housing located in a given area, inspect the camp, and describe what could be done to resolve some of the problems encountered.

Rural Law — Supervisor: Richard Vandiver

The law placement was a one-day placement designed to give the trainee a view of the philosophies, practices, and physical facilities of rural areas for law enforcement officers, judges, lawyers, and court officials. The day included attendance at a county, municipal, or district court session, after which the judge answered the questions of the trainees. The sheriff of Alamosa County conducted a tour through the county jail and district courtroom during which time much of his philosophy for contacting, arresting, and handling offenders was discussed as well as his problems with migrant farm workers, Spanish-American people in the poverty areas, and the Anglo power structure. A tour of Costilla County jails (old and new) provided a sample of outmoded facilities still in use in some rural areas. The sheriff of Costilla County explained his problems, philosophy, and facilities, comparing his problems with those of law enforcement officers in counties where Spanish-Americans are in the minority. Discussions followed the placement, elucidating the informality of rural law; the general nature of law-breaking by rural residents, minority groups, and migrant workers; problems of law enforcement officers; how to deal with law enforcement officials by understanding their situations; and how to use persons connected with our legal system as resources. At night trainees rode in patrol cars with policemen on duty in Monte Vista.

Public Health — Supervisor: Randall Lortscher

The public health placement was concerned primarily with three basic problem areas: first, disease prevention which was taught through lecture and clinic experiences; second, medical case findings which used family interviews in poverty homes; and third, coordination and development of medical services which assisted trainees to identify medical problems and resources which could be used, or had to be created, in order to solve them. The two-day placement began with a lecture consisting of descriptive accounts of various illnesses which the volunteer is likely to encounter in rural poverty areas. Trainees then made health surveys in different communities in the San Luis Valley, conducting basic health history interviews with families. Finally, they made home visits with public health nurses. The trainees also had the opportunity to visit Well Baby clinics and orthopedic clinics. The experience in public health exposed the trainees to health problems and difficulties in dealing with these problems, listed available as well as non-existent resources, and created a desire to engage in imaginative thinking and constructive action in an attempt to remedy the situations they will encounter in their placements. Perception and persistence are the by-words in handling public health problems and hunting for their solutions.

Preschool

Supervisor: Alice Higman

With instructions only to involve themselves with the children, the trainees began their two-morning preschool placement in the classrooms of the Monte Vista Head Start program. Working with the teachers and their aides and ten to fifteen children per class, the trainees received valuable insights into the education of the disadvantaged. The children were from impoverished homes, the majority of which were Spanish-speaking. Their language is skeletal at best and their culture does not equip them adequately to enter middle-class classrooms. They learn through play, so the trainees played with them. They painted, played musical instruments, sang songs, and explored with toys, puzzles, books, and on the playground. Trainees helped to supervise field trips, trips to the dentist's office, and an innoculation clinic. Their most important experience was in direct relationship with the individual child, followed by a visit to the child's home. In these relationships the trainees discovered that they had to understand the child's language, or lack of language, and view his world before they could successfully relate to him. Following the class period the Head Start teachers spoke with the trainees, giving their basic theories about teaching, emphasizing the importance of knowing the children, knowing the background from which they come, and constantly observing and being sensitive to the children in the classroom. The teachers also gave information on how to set up and furnish a preschool, and how to obtain the necessary equipment at minimal cost.

Welfare Supervisor: Patrick Jobes

The welfare placement was designed to teach the trainees the policy, philosophy, and regulations of a welfare department, its objectives and limitations as an agency dealing with the culture of poverty, and particularly the job of the caseworker. The placement was set up in three phases. During the first phase the trainees heard a discussion by a group of persons involved at the receiving end of the agency's services. This three-hour phase demonstrated specific problems of the poor and problems of receiving aid. The next half day was spent by the trainees in reading, reviewing, and discussing case studies. During this phase the trainee came to recognize the painstaking effort required of the caseworker for each case, and the tremendous expense associated with the attempt to develop case histories on the part of the agency. The limits surrounding the caseworker -- the legal, formal, and social sanctions placed on the caseworker and his client -- became evident during this phase. Finally, trainees were assigned individually or in pairs to a caseworker whom they accompanied on home visits. In this last phase the trainees saw the direct relationship between caseworker and client and completed their picture of social welfare services in rural areas.

Homemaking Supervisor: Alice Higman

The homemaking placement consisted of a day spent in the home of a Spanish-American family and, in August, an afternoon at a homemaking class conducted by the welfare department for ADC mothers. The trainees were instructed to become as aware of, and involved in, as many aspects of the home life as possible in order to learn the effects of deprivation on a family. Homes were very small, without plumbing, and furnished with wood-coal stoves. Working for a day with pumps and privies, dull axes, and large numbers of small children, trainees became aware of the complexity of the lives of the poor. The experience also enabled the trainees to have extensive conversations in which the women revealed some of their most pressing problems, including health and financial difficulties, drinking and unemployed husbands, too many children, frustrated educational goals for themselves and their children, anxiety and fear for the future, and a feeling of choicelessness in dealing with difficulty. In analysis of the placement the trainees and supervisor discussed the problems encountered and possible solutions. The formula for problem solving included compiling a complete list of service agencies, funds, resource persons, getting a total picture of the family situation, discovering alternative solutions, and guiding the family in solving its own problems where possible. The trainees learned ways to work themselves out of a job by giving knowledge instead of doing it all themselves. Several short descriptions of the homemaking placement prepared by VISTA trainees are included to provide the reader with a better sense of the experience.

Descriptions of Homemaking Placements

"My placement at the home of Mrs. Pantoa in the community of Lariat gave me insight into the living conditions of these people and what keeps them going. The C. . .'s have nine children -- six boys and three girls. My day began by chopping fire wood and ended by learning how to make tortillas. It was while making tortillas that Mrs. Pantoa began to feel more at ease with me and, thus, we were able to strike up a very informative conversation.

The conversation started to really develop when she asked me the role of a VISTA volunteer. I replied that our main concern was centered around finding out the major needs and wants of a community such as Lariat, and once established getting the community united in order to achieve these needs. I also tried to explain about the various federal, state, and county agencies which provide assistance. Upon completion of my perceived concepts of VISTA, Mrs. Pantoa went on to relate to me her various experiences with these assistance agencies, especially welfare. All of her experiences have been bad in terms of receiving no assistance when she was in time of great need. For example, ten years ago, her house burned down and one of her children died. She went to the welfare department, but received no support. It is for reasons like this she hesitates to turn to them for assistance now. She also expressed the feeling that these agencies, and the people in general, have no real concern or interest as to what happens to communities like Lariat.

It was encouraging to know that she is very interested in seeing two of her children continue their educations. Robert, who is thirteen years old, has ambitions of going onto college. I feel he can make it, given the opportunity, because he has a tremendous mind. Lonnie, who is twelve years old, wants to at least finish high school and possibly go to college later, but he feels it will cost too much money. His special interests are history, geography, and crafts.

If I learned anything today, it was that these people do not enjoy living in their present state -- as some people may think. Also, the concept of these people being shiftless and lazy is a gross misconception. Therefore, given the opportunity to improve themselves, I have no doubts whatever that they will succeed in achieving the life they want for themselves and for their children."

* * * * * *

"My name is Lucila . I have six children and live with them and my husband in a two-room house in Lariat. We have no indoor plumbing and most of our home is in disrepair. I am thirty years old and have lived in Lariat all my life. My oldest girl is thirteen and my youngest is three. With the birth of my last child I had my tubes tied so that I will not have any more children.

My husband works when he can -- in the winter in the potato cellars and in the summer lifting bales for which he is paid one and one fourth cents per bale. We rarely have enough to eat and there were times when we would have starved except for my mother. My husband drinks, and there are times when I would just like to take my children and leave him.

The welfare agencies sometimes help us, but they always make us feel terrible. They came at 7:00am one morning and I had gone to drive my husband to work. Though I had cooked the breakfast, they accused me of making Janine work over a hot stove. It was only after they questioned Janine that they believed me.

When I wake up in the mornings sometimes I am so depressed and feel so hopeless that I don't think I can go on. The house is so messy, and the children are so noisy that I sometimes can't stand it. It just doesn't seem worth living sometimes. I wash and cook and clean and then I have to start all over again. And my husband gets mad at me if things are not the way he likes them.

The VISTA people have given me hope for the first time. Now maybe someone will help us to get a nicer home and I can have indoor plumbing like in Denver, and new second-hand furniture. Then I won't be ashamed and neither will my children to bring friends home."

". . . . Lucila is a marvelous person who needs all the help we can give her before she gives up."

* * * * * * *

"Before I enumerate on the occurrences in the Bodias home, I would like to express my overall impression of Mrs. Bodias I believe that all her criticisms and complaints were genuinely and accurately felt, but I do think that she, being a woman possessing some degree of perception, realized that by incessantly talking about them she could merit some type of action directed toward her. I don't feel that she is any worse off than a lot of other people in Lariat, but by making her plight known, she makes it seem that way. This is not meant as a judgment in the negative, but just an observation on my part. I admire her for her action in tryin to get better housing and for her strength.

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After hanging out Mrs. Bodias's wash, I got a chance to discuss her problems and desires with her. She offered information most freely and was very receptive to my questions. We talked about schooling and she realized, along with her husband, that it was by far the most important aspect for betterment. She said it was hard for her to take her daughter out of school during the harvest, and that she wasn't going to do it this year. It was enlightening to see that she realized the importance of an education for her children. She said that the three younger children never spoke Spanish, although they could understand it. The father also encourages the speaking of English in the home.

Mr. Bodias's employment is cyclical, and he has a drinking problem. Consequently, their thirteen-year-old daughter works picking peas and makes on the average of a dollar a day. This statement was shocking to me because, although I had heard about it, this was the first person I had actually talked to that was working for this sub-human wage.

The house was in pretty bad shape, although Mrs. Bodias tried her hardest to keep it up. She said that when she moved there eleven years ago she told her husband they would probably spend the rest of their lives there -- and here they still are. It cost them $150.00. She and her daughter need glasses and dental work, but they can't afford them. She goes to the doctor, but can't fill the prescriptions. She knows she needs these things and she wants them, but because of monetary incapacity she just can't afford them. It is here that I think poverty exists at its worst. These people know what they need, but can't get it. The frustration must be all encompassing.

My general reaction to this experience was one of exuberance at gaining new insights and depression at seeing human hopes and desires being crushed."

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"We have fourteen children. Last Wednesday I got out of the hospital with my fourteenth child. She is a good baby -- doesn't cry unless she needs something. She has a rash. I don't know why. I am worried about my oldest girl. She had rheumatic fever and missed many school days the year before last, but only one last year. But she is still pale and green. I hope she can finish school. I only went to the fourth grade. I want all my children to graduate.

It's so hot with that wood stove. I've got to cook beans all day. Sometimes we have potatoes, but my kids like beans. They don't like meat or vegetables; only beans. When they get money, they buy candy. Their teeth are bad. But it is the one good thing I can afford for them.

Yes, we have a nice garden -- corn, beets, beans, pumpkins. Last year we had a nice crop. I canned thirty jars of beets -- even had some to give away. This year though the worms got them, so maybe I'll only can ten this year.

My husband works in the winter only. He makes $48.00 a week. He works in the hay fields and at the potato-marking warehouse. My oldest girl was supposed to work in the pea fields today. The truck didn't come -- I don't know why. She makes $1.50 a day and I save it for her. She has over a hundred dollars saved! Her sister babysits. She makes a $1.50 a day too and it's better than working in the fields all day in the hot sun. My boy wants to go to art school. He won a contest in Illinois, but couldn't go because it cost $500.00 to make the trip.

We have running water in the kitchen. We want to have it in the bathroom. Maybe next year. We have an outdoor toilet. We want an indoor one, but we can't get one yet. The flies around the toilet carry all the sickness. I don't like them. My baby has diarrhea."

". . . . Mrs. Camena is a wonderful person. She keeps a clean home and sews a lot. She is interested in each child. Her husband seems to worry and care a lot for her. They would like someday to take a trip with their family."

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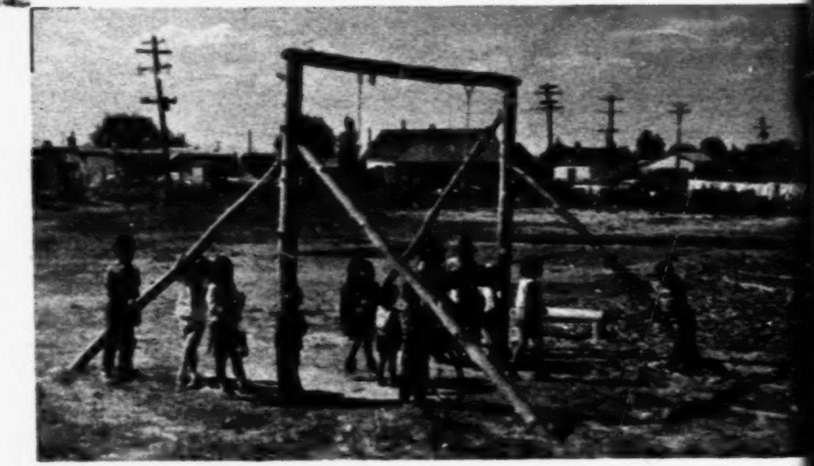
Recreation   Supervisor: Robert Hughes

Each trainee spent one full day working as a supervisor of recreation. The placement began with a lecture-discussion of recreation as an aspect of community organization, recreation as fun -- not as character building --, recreation as a device for helping children, and techniques of supervision. Then the trainees worked in the two recreation areas of Lariat -- the younger children's playground and the ball field. There they were given brief instruction in games, and left to their own devices for involving the children in games and for maintaining their interest. An effort was made to have each trainee spend one half day working on the playground and one half day on the ball field in order to give some experience in working with youngsters of all ages. The activities of each game, or failure to start a game, arguments, fights, apathy, short attention spans were used as teaching devices in the post-placement analysis of the day. The games played on the playground included: four-square, rope skipping, "little pinky," kick ball, dodge ball, catch, keep-away, and tether ball. With the exception of the last, the children needed instruction before they could participate in these games. On the ball field softball, "work-up" basketball, and football were the main activities.



Supervisors:
Reyes Ramos
Stuart Matlack

Construction - "Operation Elbow Room"

As the name of the field placement implies, training in construction accomplished the purpose of teaching methods of inexpensive construction with native materials, and served the additional purpose of providing more space for living for the people of Lariat.

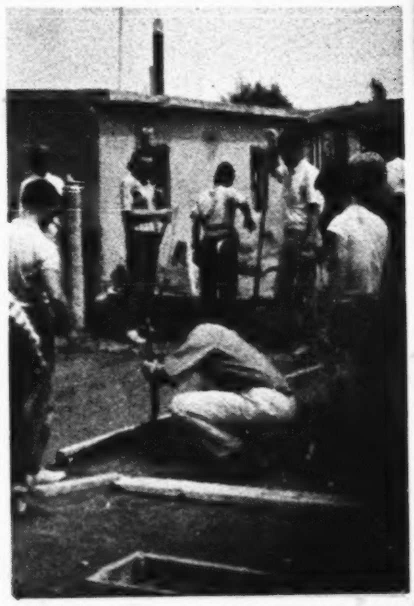
The VISTA I training group constructed a twenty-by-twenty four-foot addition on the one-room structure of a family selected by the community's leaders. While half of the group went to the mountains to cut and transport aspen logs, the remainder dug a foundation, collected rock, and mixed concrete for the floor of the room. The staff and trainees together worked under the direction of three Spanish-American foremen who were hired because of their knowledge and experience with wood-adobe construction. Two of the foremen spoke virtually no English and the trainees spoke little understandable Spanish. This gave trainees the additional experience of learning how to work together effectively toward a common goal without the benefit of language symbols so necessary for middle-class interaction. The effort was made more complex by the fact that the foremen themselves did not necessarily agree on all aspects of construction. Trainees learned how to use such tools as the shovel, pick, hoe, axe, draw knife, saw, level, chalk line, cement finishing tools, and at the same time keep peace among themselves and the foremen. Many of the residents of Lariat contributed material and tools for the building of the room. Amused at the lack of skill of the trainees and amazed at their tenacity, many men stopped by the house several times a day to give trainees special instruction on how to square up a log with a hand axe or how to plaster with adobe.

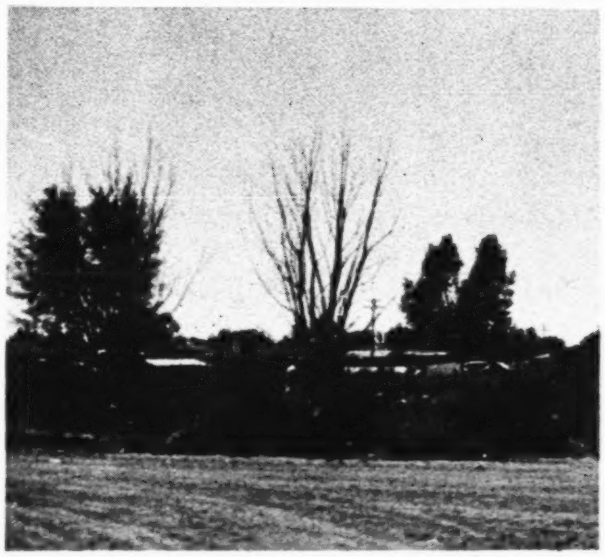
In addition, the first training group cleared two large fields of chico weed, brush, and trash so that they could be used as playgrounds. A trash clean-up program was also undertaken, but phased out as local residents, infected with the spirit of activity, took over the clean-up program themselves.

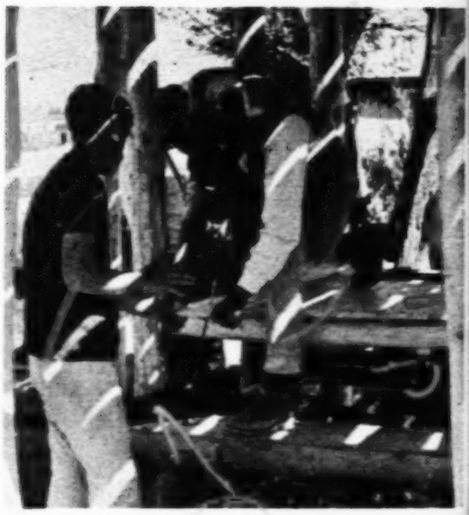
VISTA II followed much the same procedure in constructing two twenty-by-forty foot open structures which formed a community plaza. Again, aspen logs were cut and trucked from the San Juan National Forest at the cost of $5.00 for a permit and gasoline. The logs were tarred and the structures erected to serve as shelters for six picnic tables. The roof was covered with grass sod in the style of many Lariat homes. Fireplaces were built of natural stone as was the large rock garden which was planted with native flora (weeds). These can live in the strongly alkali soil of the area with little special care.

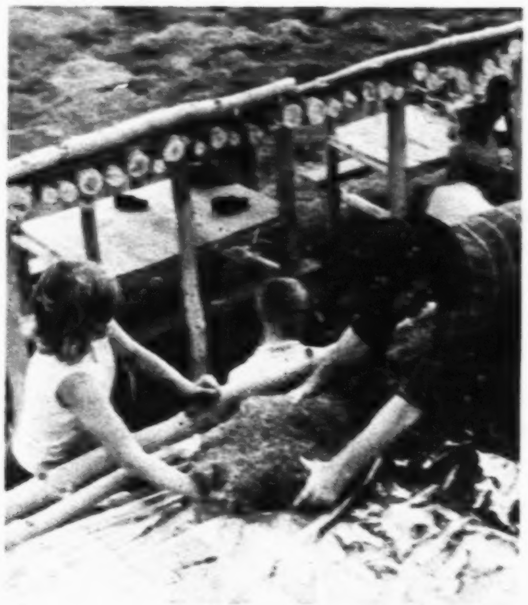
The second training group finished the clearing of the playing fields, constructed swings, a teeter-totter, and other playground equipment for the younger children as well as a backstop for the ballfield.

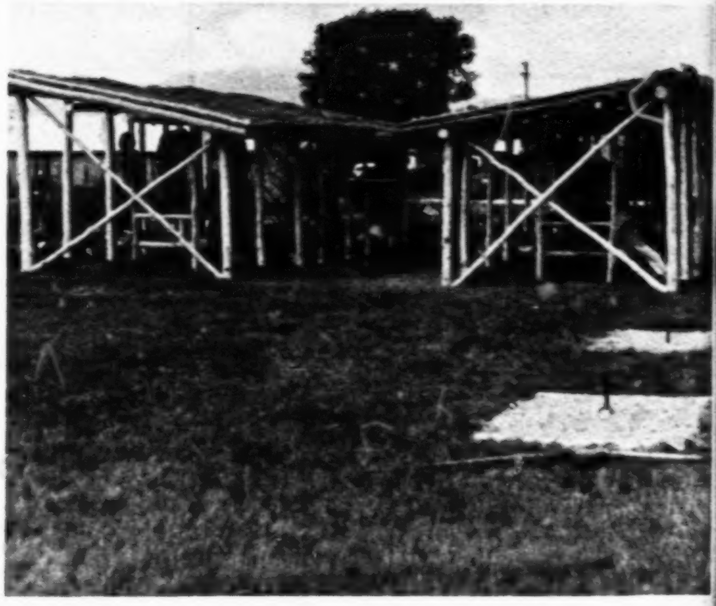
Both groups of trainees learned that construction can be inexpensive if unemployed persons and native materials are available, and that such activity can serve as the focal point for the development of community spirit.











Sensitivity Training - The Listening Log

One of the major objectives of the training program was to teach the VISTA trainee to become sensitive to verbal cues from all persons in his environment. We did not direct our training toward making the trainees more sensitive to each other, but toward the poor and the other persons that they met in their field experiences. Major emphasis was placed on hearing phrases which were indicative of problems which can be easily overlooked or misunderstood because of different meanings of words. For example, the most frequent response of the poor in the San Luis Valley to questions about health and medicine was that they were in good health and had few medical problems. Further probing brought forth a deluge of serious health problems.

Trainees kept a daily log of cues they heard during their field experiences. A random selection of these cues is presented by what we have called "themes of the culture of poverty."

Themes of the culture of Poverty

1. Reference to medical needs

"I have to stay on welfare even though I could work, because I can't make enough to meet a sudden medical bill." (ADC mother)

"I hurt my back pumping at the well. I don't go to a doctor because I don't know any."

"We have never seen the public health nurse."

"Both my sister and I have a history of heart trouble. Last Monday my son, John, became very ill. In the morning he started fainting and vomiting, but by three in the afternoon he seemed to be alright, so we didn't call the doctor."

"Tim complains of having sore legs. I'd like to take him to Denver, but it costs too much. The doctor said it might be rheumatic fever."

"When anyone gets hurt real bad, they usually die before we can get them to a hospital or doctor -- the facilities are so far away. Like the girl who got her pony tail caught in the machinery and was scalped."

"We have never needed a doctor, so I don't know what we would do if someone got sick."

"No, I haven't got sick yet this year, but I do get sick every summer when we're on the road -- sicker than I get at home."

"Look! My teeth are falling apart." (five-year-old preschooler)

"I was supposed to go back to the clinic forty days after the baby was born, but I haven't any way to get there. I asked my neighbor, but she didn't seem to want to take me." (mother of six children)

"Most of my children weren't born in a hospital. Frank has had a collapsed lung either from pneumonia or typhoid. Two of my other sons had typhoid." (mother of ten children)

"The kids ought to have shots, but they aren't in school yet."

"My brother is fifteen years old and he can't talk. He has never been to a doctor." (ten-year-old Spanish-American boy)

2. Reference to employment

"My husband works in the fields half the year and half the year he doesn't work."

"I'm an irrigator, but I was laid off last week. Maybe I can get some work next week."

"My father works in the saw mill, but it broke down last night so he don't have a job until they fix it." (nine-year-old Spanish-American girl)

"I got a better paying job then most guys with an education; that's cause I'm aggressive." (seventeen year-old Spanish-American boy)

"My mother works in the lettuce fields so I take care of the children." (eleven-year-old caring for five children)

"With three kids at home I'd rather stay home and take care of them. I work in the lettuce fields because this way we can pay some of the bills we owe." (working mother)

"My father is too sick to work. My mother says he has cancer. No, he hasn't been to a doctor." (twelve year-old girl)

"It don't matter too much whether you've graduated from high school or not. You still can't get a good job around here." (nineteen year-old girl)

"Most jobs around here pay 50-75¢ an hour. That's about all you can make around here." (sixteen-year-old Anglo girl)

"You can't find work around here, but still we can't get any help from the welfare." (mother with seven children)

3. Reference to time perspective

"Time don't mean much to Max. He just lives from day to day to have a good time." (sixteen-year-old boy)

"She caught her arm in the wringer a week ago last Wednesday -- or was it Thursday? I can't remember."

"I'm so absent minded I just can't remember when Stevie cut his head -- a year ago; maybe two years ago." (young Spanish-American mother)

"We won't be here next month anyway. We're probably going to Salt Lake."

"We've lived here since Jimmy was born. Let's see now -- maybe that was in 1946?" (mother of nine children)

"I think we'll be back in New Mexico in August; then maybe the children can begin school."

4. Reference to leadership

"For many years I used to help organize both a baseball and softball team for boys and girls, but they ain't interested anymore."

"The minister here has helped us. He's going to help us get city water."

"The crew leader is the only one who can impress these people with anything. When he lights into them, they'll do what he says. We can't make them do anything." (local grower)

"We contract a crewboss and he takes care of his men. We have no control over the group. They don't bother us and we don't bother them." (grower in another part of the Valley)

5. Reference to reference groups

"He could afford to move out if he wanted to, but he'd rather stay with his own and help."

"Them there migrants from Texas are worse than the native Spanish-Americans." (policeman)

"We Spanish-Americans around here don't get along too well with the Texans."

"Now, we call them Spanish-Americans. Well, I was raised around here and half the time I call them Mexicans. They don't like it."

6. Reference to bureaucratic static

"If I went to Alamosa I could get a better job; maybe 50¢ more an hour. But they'd just cut down my husband's veterans pay."

"You can't just take a sick child to a hospital. You have to have a doctor who refers you."

"These doctors at the hospital just won't help us. They see we're poor and just don't have no money. There is no use going."

"The worst part of this job is having to write up all these damn reports. There's no time to help people."

"They said they would send us a card and we could have an appointment, but the card didn't ever come."

"The principal wouldn't believe that my sister was really sick."

"We waited for the papers from the welfare department, but they never came."

"If you followed all them housing regulations that the state puts out, you'd go broke."

7. Reference to the Law

"He beat me up, so I called the police to put him in jail."

"You be good or I'll tell the police to come get you."

"My son went to jail when he was seventeen. He's been there three years now."

"It's illegal to have an outhouse here in town, but what can we do about it."

"I think most cops are bastards."

"We don't have any difficulties with the police -- we see them often and we get along fine."

"They even have Spanish-Americans on the police force. I think they're all fair to us."

"The police, they patrol this area pretty well -- better than in the big cities. Do you know what goes on in cities?"

8. Reference to fun behavior

"I get so sick of my kids I couldn't baby sit if I had to. Some people think large families are fun. Well, they aren't. If you don't want kids, you seem to have one every year."

"The kids around here get in trouble because there is nothing else to do. There's a dance tonight because of the rodeo, but we probably won't do anything else until next year."

"All there is to do in this town is go out and get drunk."

"There's nothing to do here. One time they started a canteen, but the rich kids took it over."

"I like staying home to take care of the kids -- it's fun." (ten-year-old staying home to take care of eight sisters)

"We just mess around -- there's nothing else to do."

"We watch television a lot."

9. Reference to reverence

"All my children have baptismal certificates."

"I go to church on Sundays because I think it's a good thing for the children. I'm not religious, but my husband makes me go."

"I know how the church feels about it, but I take birth control pills anyway."

10. Reference to geographic mobility

"We came from New Mexico; I don't know where we will go next."

"We came up to work lettuce. We'll live with my wife's sister here until the season's over; then we'll go back to Salina."

"My son is in Denver and wants me to come, but I am too old to go there."

"If people in Lariat make money, they spend it right here in Monte Vista. If the middle class get some extra money, they go to Denver to buy a dress." (local businessman)

"My brother lives in Los Angeles and I am going out to visit him next month."

"Anyone with any ambition gets out of here -- I don't know why I am staying here."

"I've had babies all over the country -- two in New Mexico; five in Del Norte; one in Texas; I lost one right here last February."

11. Reference to dependency on the public

"My kids don't want people to know we're on welfare; they don't even want their friends to see where they live."

"I tried hard. I was off welfare for three years. During that time I did sewing, but I barely earned enough to keep milk for the kids."

"After my husband was hurt in that accident, we could have got welfare, but I didn't want it. I don't like to get mixed up with the law."

"Many times the biggest problem is to convince a family that they need welfare." (caseworker)

"I'm on an Old Age Pension. I've worked all my life in the fields and I think I've earned it."

"If the VISTA volunteers help us, will they cut my welfare check?"

12. Reference to the schools

"We think we'll stay here so the kids can go to school." (migrant father)

"We want to build a house and stay here, so the kids can go to a school."

"Back in Texas the kids all attend school, but up here in late spring and early fall they have no educational facilities."

"I go to school only when I'm in Texas -- about six months a year." (daughter of a migrant worker)

"It's summer vacation now, but I love to go to school. Wish it was time to go back again."

"I like school; especially the other children."

"There isn't any bus service out here and the kids have to walk seven blocks in the cold -- it gets forty degrees below here in the winter." (local mother)

"Back in my day there wasn't any high school. I went as far as I could and graduated from the eighth grade." (older Spanish-American woman)

"I'd like to attend adult education classes to learn typing. My husband graduated from high school, but I only went as far as the tenth grade."

"I don't think Lariat kids want to leave school anymore than any other kids. Most of them hate it when summer comes." (local school teacher)

"I wanted to finish school, but my mother was sick and I had to stay home with the kids. I missed so much school that the teacher said it probably would be better if I just didn't bother to come anymore."

Summary

There is little that can be said about the preceding quotations that the phrases don't eloquently say for themselves. Trainees heard such comments day after day. One final comment should be recorded, however, because in its simplicity it illustrates so much about the problems of poverty. The comment was reported by one of the staff supervisors who was working with trainees and children on the newly-cleared playground. The trainees and the children were taking turns telling each other stories when a six-year-old looked up at the supervisor and said: "Have you ever seen your mother cry?" The supervisor replied, "No, I haven't." The child's eyes widened. "Don't your mother cry when your brothers and sisters die?"

Summary - Monte Vista Field Experience

The field placement section of the training program was designed to provide practical knowledge and experience with people in poverty and their problems. There was no intention of providing specific services to the poor, and every effort was made to warn trainees not to start things that they could not finish. Yet, given poverty conditions and the enthusiastic resourcefulness of VISTA trainees, it was inevitable that some helping services would be given.

As a result of the public health training, the staff physician and the public health nurse found themselves treating children and adults that would never have seen a medical specialist if the trainees had not been there. On several occasions the lecture room was turned into an infirmary as trainees brought children to the doctor for treatment.

Dental examinations in the preschool demonstrated a critical need for dental care. Of the seventy-five children examined, seventy-two had serious dental problems. The average number of cavities was 5.5 per child. One third had abscesses and another third had other types of gum infections. Arrangements were made with a local service club, the welfare department, and two women's clubs to provide transportation for the children to the nearest free clinic some sixty miles away.

A variety of problems were called to the attention of the welfare department, social security, and vocational rehabilitation. A special study was conducted for the local police department. Children received special tutoring during the few off-hours of the trainees. Recruiting for the Job Corps was done on the side. An interest in adult education was stimulated. The actual providing of needed services taught trainees and staff practical ways of creating services to meet the needs of the poor in rural areas.

In effect, the entire VISTA training program was a six-week field placement. The towns of the San Luis Valley were the field settings, and both staff and trainees learned from the people of the communities as they responded to the presence of the educational experiment. For persons who have been raised in a metropolitan area, simply trying to live in a small rural town is a learning experience in itself. Before a trainee can successfully enter a rural community, he must have a full understanding of the speed with which information (irrespective of its veracity) moves through the small town communication network. From the barbershop, the doctor's office, the gas station, to the coffee shop, to the office of the mayor, or the home of a county commissioner, word of good fortune or of a mistake can pass in minutes. If a male trainee was seen in the company of a local girl, the university staff knew about it before the day was over. The trainees and staff alike learned the critical lesson that there is no such thing as anonymity, or a private life, for a VISTA volunteer in a small town. The San Luis Valley was the teacher.

V.

Migrants in an Urban Setting

The migratory agricultural worker is found not only in the rural areas of the United States, but in the large cities as well. Frequently they can be found in the skid row areas of the metropolis where they await the beginning of the harvest season. Increasingly migrants appear as permanent or semi-permanent residents of the lower income areas of the city where they converge as drop outs from the migrant stream. The migrant may be eliminated from the farm labor force temporarily as a consequence of a season's bad weather or permanently as a result of agricultural automation.

If the trainee was to obtain the broad picture of the people he was to help, he needed exposure to the living conditions confronting the migrant in the city. In order to provide this experience, the first three days of the training program and the final week used Denver as the educational setting. In addition to the use of basic instructors, four different demonstrations were designed to communicate the problems of the migrant in the city to the trainees.

Larimer Street Demonstration - "Operation Haberdashery"

The skid row of any city provides a variety of resources to persons who have little or no money, nothing to do, and nowhere to go. Denver's Larimer Street, located three blocks from the Oxford Hotel where the trainees were housed, is no exception. On the morning of the first day of the training program VISTA trainees were instructed to get acquainted with the "Street." The ostensive reason for going to the skid row was to purchase needed clothing for the rural training experience that was to come in Monte Vista. Few of the trainees had arrived in Denver with hats, gloves, blue jeans, work shoes, and other accessories needed for construction work or other activity in a rural setting. Trainees also had little money. They were told to spend no more than a dollar and a half and to go to places such as the Salvation Army Store, Volunteers of America, or the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to obtain what they needed. For the majority who observed the arbitrary financial limits, the experience taught them about available resources to meet basic needs. All manner of clothing is available at low cost. For those who had more than a dollar and a half with them and allowed this fact to become known to the salesman, it was obvious that the guiding principles of sales on the "street" are "charge what the traffic will bear" and "let the buyer beware!" Irrespective of whether the trainee made a good buy or "got took," all saw the activity that occurs at mid-morning on skid row. The unemployed men standing around in small groups, the wino starting his day's bender, the policeman on his beat, the office secretary or businessman taking a short cut through the district -- all these and much more.

Semantic Analysis - "Operation Eavesdropping"

A great many characteristics which distinguish a culture, whether it be middle class, upper, or lower can be better understood with the ears than with the eyes. To teach the trainees the important differences between the upper-middle class and the economically-deprived groups as well as to reinforce the idea that "listening" is important, the staff instructed the trainees to dress in their best suits and dresses, go to the better hotels, restaurants, lounges, and other spots where the middle class residents of Denver are apt to be, and listen to -- and record -- what they heard. Since any environment produces far too much informational content for the learning experience which was desired, trainees' listening was structured by the following guidelines:

The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

Field Observation Assignment: Eavesdropping

1. Prepare chronology of events (time, location, transportation).

2. Give journalistic description of events.

3. Create semantic dictionary by listing words overheard according to the following categories:
   - a. Geographic places (i.e., California, the West Coast, Denver, etc.)
   - b. Non-geographic places (i.e., coffee shop, 5th and Arapahoe, Brown Palace.)
   - c. Amounts: (1) Time (90 days, 30 minutes, 1936)
     (2) Money (i.e., $1000, 30¢, two quarters)
     (3) Numbers (6 carloads, two shots)
   - d. Commodities (wheat, automobiles, one gross of toothbrushes).
   - e. Things (my Oldsmobile, another glass).
   - f. Foods (T-Bone steak, martini, butter and rolls).
   - g. Important statuses (Johnson, president, the governor).

4. Classify all conversations you overhear in terms of their reference to primary groups (family, close friends) or secondary groups (other references).

5. Listen to at least two longer conversations and give synopsis of content and classify according to whether the conversation was predominantly instrumental (action-oriented) or affective (emotive-catharsis).

6. Prepare a brief interpretation of the significance of this field observation experience to you.

Several essays are reproduced below which demonstrate the nature of the learning experience:

1. Walked to Hilton Hotel at 3:00pm July 25. In lobby at Hilton from 3:00 to 4:00pm. Walked to Shirley Savoy, Cosmopolitan, and Brown Palace about 4:00pm. Returned to Hilton at 4:30 to 5:00pm. Walked back to Oxford about 5:00pm.

2. The only conversations overheard were in the Hilton Hotel. Registration for a convention (American Association of Workers for the Blind) was being held, so there were people all over the lobby, coffee shop, ice cream shop, and entrance area. I was alone or with Cliff Schweitzer, Mike Holloway, and Ginger Norton. I was in the Hilton most of the afternoon, and walked through the lobbies of the Shirley Savoy, Cosmopolitan and Brown Palace, but there were very few people other than VISTA trainees there. All of these places were visited between 3:30 and 5:00pm approximately. It was very easy to mingle with the arriving and registering men and women without appearing conspicuous.

3. (a) geographic places:
    - Market Street
    - San Francisco
    - Milwaukee
    - Arkansas
    - Amphibious Base
    - Coronado, California
    - College Shopping Center
    - La Mesa, California
    - Lemon Grove, California
    - Miami
    - Mission Valley Freeway
    - Mississippi
    - Ontario
    - San Diego
    - Viet Nam

   (b) non-geographic places:
    - Hilton
    - Room 4344
    - home
    - dining room
    - coffee shop

   (c) amounts:
    - time - a few months
        - '48
        - '22
        - 5 minutes to 12
        - 12ish
        - last night
        - 2 weeks
        - a little later
    - money - $2.50
    - numbers - 60 miles
        - 1000 girls
        - 2 miles
        - 6 blocks

   (e) things:
    - texts
    - hair
    - flood
    - tranquilizers
    - shoe shine machine
    - project
    - furs
    - college
    - reserve training
    - forms
    - pink negligee
    - troop
    - car
    - ships
    - dock
    - tour
    - diamonds
    - grade-point average
    - L.A. convention
    - the election
    - sailors
    - tattoo
    - stock market
    - published work
    - highrise apartments
    - sight-seeing buses

(f) foods:
  coke
  steak

(g) statuses:
  Johnson
  district chairman
  director of state services for the blind

4. The only primary group references were to the family and the district. Two men referred to leaving "the wife" at home. One spoke of trips with "my wife." One mentioned his son and daughter. One woman spoke of attending many district conventions. One man said this district had bad points, but didn't mention them.

The secondary group reference was to Johnson and his doctors.

5. Three men were discussing the armed services, Vietnam, and President Johnson. Ideas expressed: ships in San Francisco are anchored closer to the docks now than they used to be so it looks like there are fewer ships; there are fewer sailors in the streets now; more sailors wear civilian clothes now; 15,000 went to Vietnam; the scare on the stock market was due to a rumor that Johnson had a heart attack, and how he is on so many tranquilizers that he doesn't get mad at press conferences anymore. This was affective conversation.

Two men were sitting at a counter in the pharmacy discussing one's home, San Diego, and family. This man did most of the talking: he's having a hell of a time getting his seventeen-year-old daughter into college; she doesn't have the grades for State and will have to go to City; her grades dropped when she was engaged to a non-college boy; there will be a hassle for the car when she's at City and her eighteen-year-old brother is at State. This man then went into a description of where he lived in relation to various San Diego area landmarks and neighborhoods. Affective conversations.

6. This experience showed the difference in subject matter, and therefore interests of upper-middle-class conversation and lower-class conversations that we were interested in for the listening logs. It also illustrated how easy it is to eavesdrop and how much can be learned if done in the right places.

* * * * * * *

1. Left hotel at 7:10pm by car; was driven to Brown Palace Hotel; snooped there; went to bus depot; eavesdropped on sidewalk passers-by; stopped at two book and magazine shops; returned to Oxford at 8:30pm.

2. (a) geographic places:
  Montreal
  Canada
  Mercer Island

(b) non-geographical places:
  island
  bridge
  residential section

(c) amounts:
time - 6:15
7:00
8:00
5 minutes
not 25 past yet
1:00
14 years

(d) commodities:
(none)

(e) things:
cigarettes
golf clubs
truck
desk
car

(f) foods:
booze

3. References:
Primary - wife
daughter
mother
Secondary - American Legion

4. Two elderly ladies conversing in hotel lobby, discussing the passing away of one of their husbands; the long illness; the medical test which cost eighty dollars; the sorrow of his passing: "Well, you did everything you could." Affective

A negro man and woman in their early twenties, conversing casually at first at a bus station. The young lady did most of the talking -- of her travels, personal likes and dislikes: "I like to see everything and be seen." Conversation ended as they went off together to get a drink. Affective

5. This experience demonstrates what Scott Fitzgerald meant when he said, "The rich are very different than us." The more affluent people are concerned with time, while the dispossessed (especially the Spanish-American migrant) is prone to act as if time did not exist. Other lessons can be drawn, especially in the art of communication and, more importantly, listening.

* * * * * * *

1. Mike Holloway and I left the Oxford and first went to the Hilton. We separated when we got there, and I heard conversations in the phone booths, the rest rooms, sitting on sofas in the lobby, and walking through the AAWB convention display. About 4:00pm Mike and I went into the coffee shop to listen to four teenagers. From there we went to the Shirley Savoy Hotel -- no one there; the Cosmopolitan, no one there; the Brown Palace, no one there. After that unsuccessful event we went back to the Hilton. I rode the elevators, sat in the women's lounge with an open book, and read magazines in a drug store.

3. (a) geographic places:
Kansas
Boulder
Aspen
Athens
Washington, D. C.

(b) non-geographic places:
- coffee shop
- theatre
- show
- Shakey's
- bar

(c) amounts:
- time - this morning
  - two days
  - tomorrow
  - last week
  - this evening
  - five minutes
  - from 12 to 7
- money - borrow a dime
  - cost me $38
  - 3 bills for a cab
- numbers - five floors
  - three dogs

(e) things:
- umbrella
- boots
- Volkswagon
- sweatshirt
- track meet
- purse
- swimming pool
- cigarettes
- elevator
- seeing-eye dog
- cane
- skis

(f) food:
- pizza
- shot
- french fries

(g) statuses:
- director of AAWB - "nice man with a goatee"

4. I didn't hear any conversations with respect to primary groups; all were secondary.

5. The two longer conversations I heard were both affective. One was a woman talking on the phone: she was complaining about the rains and the floods. The other was between two men who were at the AAWB convention. They were discussing a regional director who was "one hell of a man." "Can't find a smarter son of a bitch anywhere."

6. I felt the significance of this afternoon's adventure lay in finding out the difference of popular conversation pieces in places like Denver and Monte Vista. Many of the things I heard today would be unheard of, or very remote from people, in Lariat. We also learned how easy it is to be nosey, which will be important this year. All in all I really enjoyed doing this, and thought it a quite clever idea.

* * * * * * *

1. (a) Went to second floor lobby of Brown Palace. There was a "Coast to Coast" Sales Convention going on. Listened to conversation of two businessmen.

(b) Proceded to Brown Palace Bar, The Ship's Tavern, with a male companion. Listened to conversation between two women. The one that spoke was a platinum blond woman, fiftyish, richly clad, etc. She was extremely loud, fairly soused, and indignant at times.

(c) Went to Coffee Shop of Brown Palace. Listened to two men for a short time. (They left before my coffee cooled down.)

(d) Returned to lobby and rest room of Brown Palace. Heard conversation of two convention wives in rest room and bits of conversation of younger businessmen.

(e) Also listened to two men in corridor of Brown Palace.

2. I spent most of my time in the Brown Palace area. The conversation between the businessmen was a discussion of production tactics, how to increase profits, etc. This lasted from 2:30pm til 3:30pm or so. They spoke of moving the store from one building to another. Also of "buying out" people, etc.

The woman in the bar skipped from one conversation to another. She complained of her food and had it sent back three times. She spoke of "the Jewish people's places" in New York, types of food, herself, the flood, and mocked a tourist (in bermudas and camera) -- asked if he wanted to take her picture. This lasted til about 5:00pm or so; then we staggered back to the coffee shop.

The next interesting conversation was between the two convention wives. They discussed typical middle-upper class topics concerning homes, moving, husband's businesses, etc. This took place while I was in a very conspicuous place in the woman's rest room. Their conversation lasted for about fifteen minutes, after which I left and walked to the corridor and heard smatterings of "business" conversations.

I left the hotel around 6:00pm and returned, soaking wet, to the Oxford.

3. (a) geographic places:
    Europe
    New York City
    Baltimore
    Denver
    Colorado Springs
    Chicago
    Phillips
    Wisconsin

(b) non-geographic places:
    Centennial Race Track
    sidewalk cafe
    opera
    International Hotel
    convention rooms
    show
    elevator

(c) amounts:
    time - 5 more years
        lived there 4 years
        a year ago in June

money - $4000 - $5000
$2,000 different
$6,200 gross
above $80,000
buy out at $67,000

numbers - 100%
8 children
"had only one little room"

(d) commodities:
Barbie dolls
Matell toys

(e) things:
14 year-old kid
my home
the organization
my wardrobe
my own apartment

(f) foods:
french fries
"this is a good drink"
Reuben sandwich

4. Primary groups: my folks
my husband
my children
my best friend
my brother

Secondary groups: the organization
realtors
"Jews"
secretaries
this company

5. The conversation between the first two businessmen and the intoxicated women were mainly emotive-catharsis. The one businessman was telling the other that he could buy out this company and the other was agreeing and sympathizing. The woman obviously just wanted to say anything and everything to make herself feel better.

I heard bits of an action-oriented conversation. The chairman of the convention was telling a man to pass out the kits after the meal and before the speaker.

6. The significance of this observation was to see the difference physically, mentally, and conversationally between those of Lariat and of the power structure. The vocabulary was completely different, not only due to education but also due to completely different backgrounds, experiences, wealth, etc.

* * * * * * *

1. Left Oxford Hotel about 7:00pm by car, was dropped off at the Brown Palace Hotel. Browsed in and out of the hotel all evening, moving from lobby to convention room, and so on.

2. I listened in on a variety of conversations, catching only bits and snatches of most of them. I had difficulty hearing in most cases. People were talking quietly and I couldn't get close enough without being noticeable. I moved around a great deal trying to get in on a good conversation, but, in general, there were not many people around and I had to circulate a lot to pick up the little bit that I did.

3. (a) geographic places:
    Kansas City
    California
    Wichita

(b) non-geographic places:
    downtown
    that room

(c) amounts:
    time - 8:30pm
    tomorrow
    Saturday
    a few minutes

    money - $3.50

    numbers - second floor

(d) commodities:
    bags

(e) things:
    escalator
    quiz program
    TV
    air conditioner
    your room
    desk
    glass of water
    my car
    theatre

(f)
(f) statuses:
    Audrey Hepburn
    Rod Taylor

4. All the conversations I heard involved secondary groups, except the one in which two women were discussing their sinus troubles.

5. I overheard a conversation between two elderly women in which they were discussing the sinus problems of the one. The other was telling of her experience with the problem and giving suggestions and remedies for treatment. I think that the conversation was predominantly affective, as both women seemed emotionally tied up in what they were discussing.

The second long conversation I overheard involved a family (I presumed them to be tourists) discussing what show to see that night. The wife was looking in the paper and reading off the various shows that were playing and their times. A discussion followed the naming of each show as to what it was about, whether it was good or not, and so forth. Conversation was action-oriented, as its aim was to decide on a movie which they would go and see.

6. This experience was significant to me as a volunteer because it helped me to sharpen my listening habits so that I can filter out the comments that may be relevant to me and my work. In my final placement, it will be vital for me to know how my community feels about certain things and what issues are of real concern to them. Of course, I can get a great deal of this just by talking with people, but a trained ear may help me to pick up details and facts that I would not have gotten otherwise. Keeping one's ears open and being able to select out the important elements in a conversation will be a tremendous aid in helping me to know my community and come to understand their attitudes and feelings.

* * * * * * *

1. 7:00pm: left hotel by car; arrived at 7:15pm at Brown Palace Hotel. Went to St. Francis Hotel (bar) at 7:28pm. Conversation there consisted of families and their activites. At 7:35pm went to Imperial Room. Conversation there consisted of merchandise bought by hotel. Bellboys were discussing money spent by the hotel. At 7:45pm went to Trader Vic's. Conversation was mostly in Japanese; however, there were a few recognizable words in English. At 7:55pm went to Brown Palace Hotel lobby and heard a conversation on dogs. Then went to the coffee shop entrance and heard conversation on politics.

3. (a) geographic places:
    - Los Angeles
    - Reno
    - Boulder
    - Denver
    - Kansas

   (b) non-geographic places:
    - home
    - Larimer Street
    - capitol

   (c) amounts:
    - time - 1964
      - 5 months
      - 3 years
    - money - $200
      - $5000
    - numbers - 1 case
      - 1 carload of sand

   (d) commodities:
    - sand
    - gravel

   (e) foods:
    - dog food
    - steak

   (f) statuses:
    - mayor
    - governor
    - secretary

6. To me this field of observation experience enabled me to find out what people of the middle class usually talk about in public. I have come to the conclusion that the usual topics of conversations are: the families, politics, and past experiences. I heard one conversation which was action-oriented where one man wanted to buy gravel or sand for his driveway, but could not bring the price down to the amount he wanted to spend. Overhearing conversations could prove to be a good source of local information also.

* * * * * * *

Watching the Unemployed

Migrants who are temporarily out of the farm labor market must join the large pool of job seekers in the city. What is it like to find a job in Denver, Colorado, if you are illiterate and have virtually no marketable vocational skills? The VISTA trainees found the answer to this question by visiting the places unemployed men go to in Denver to find temporary work.

The time of day is an important consideration if the purpose of the field experience is to illustrate the abstract principles of classroom lectures about employment and job finding. Job finding tends to occur between 6:00am and 8:00am. VISTA trainees had been in the areas where men obtain casual and day labor, but at the wrong times. At noon one does not see lines of men waiting for a job on Larimer Street or at the "slave market" on Seventeenth Street. By twelve o'clock unemployment, like much of the rest of poverty, is invisible.

The Denargo Market. Like most major cities, Denver has a section where most of the wholesale produce warehouses and salesrooms are concentrated -- the Denargo Market. The market is open twenty-four hours a day, but the activity of interest to the trainees begins at about 5:30am when the produce trucks are unloaded and farmers who employ day laborers for truck crops and sugar beets arrive to pick their crews. Since activity begins before sun up, the trainees were roused at 4:30am, loaded into cars without breakfast, and unloaded at the Denargo Market. It was not a pleasant day. The sky was overcast and a fine drizzle made it seem colder than it actually was.

The Colorado Employment Service maintains an office at the market to assist job seekers and potential employers. The office was open when the trainees arrived. Dressed in old clothes, the trainees broke up into small groups and entered the office. It was warmer outside. Several asked what jobs were available. There were none at that hour. A number of men had been waiting in front of the office. They became apprehensive when they saw the available labor force at the market that morning, but seemed somewhat relieved when the trainees explained that they were just observing rather than actually looking for jobs. Since there was no action at the office, trainees left to wander about the produce sheds. The origin of the produce could be determined from the names on the sides of boxes, and lettuce and spinach from farms the VISTA trainees had seen in the San Luis Valley were identified in several salesrooms. The time was 6:15am when the group left the Denargo Market. They still had not eaten and they were reminded that the unemployed men at the Employment Office had to walk the three miles that they -- the trainees -- were covering by car.

The "Slave Market". Trainees had passed the Seventeenth Street Employment Service Office often on the sorties to downtown Denver, but had never seen it in operation. They had been there too late in the day. Shop opens at 7:00am and by 8:00 or 9:00am any jobs to be had have been taken. Half of the group that had been at the Denargo Market returned to Seventeenth and Market Stree broke into groups of three or four, and entered the office. They stood in l with the thirty-five men who were looking for work and, when possible, engage them in conversation.

The first telephone call of the day was signalled by one ring. It was the police calling. They were looking for a fugitive. He was not in lin The second call was someone looking for a man who wanted to do some landscapi on the southeast side of Denver. Only one man present had a car. After some pressure from the employment officer the man hesitatingly said he didn't want the job. One of the trainees asked him why he didn't take the job.

> "Look outside," he said. "It's raining! It's outside work and I don't have a raincoat. If I go out there, I'd work for maybe four hours. I'll get maybe five or six dollars. It costs a dollar and a half to get there. I'd get wet and catch cold, and I couldn't work tomorrow. Who'll feed the kids?"

The first group of trainees left as their colleages who had been up on Larimer started to arrive. By 7:45am the phone had stopped ringing. Three men had been placed and the remainder began to drift away. It was obvious th on rainy days, there aren't many jobs for the unskilled.

Larimer Street -- A Line Up. On Larimer Street, VISTA's joined the men standing near the curb between Eighteenth and Nineteenth Streets. No one runs the Employment Service on Larimer and all of the men who are there are n necessarily looking for work. Some, up early, are just looking for conversat with the men who are waiting for a job offer. Here is how it works: A pick- truck drives up and stops. The driver points at two men leaning on parking meters. "Looking for work? Got a semi to unload. Bags of cement. It'll tak about four hours. I'll pay a dollar and a half an hour." The men nod, climb into the back of the pick-up, and are gone. If one looks to the left and right he can count perhaps fifty men who appear to be waiting for a job opportunity. By eight o'clock the jobs have been passed out. The men then have to make the decisions about the remainder of the day. Some start the rounds of places the have heard may need help. Word of jobs passes quickly here. Others leave to back to their hotel room or flop. The remainder stand and talk or head back i the bars which are open and where drinks are cheap.

The VISTA trainees walked back to the Oxford Hotel for breakfast and a short nap before their classroom lecture. The drizzle had changed to a ligh but steady rain. They sat around the lobby talking or sleeping. They were ti and it was only 9:00am.

That is what it is like to look for a job in Denver if you are a temporarily unemployed migrant worker.

Basic Instructors

Several demonstrations using basic instructors were employed to teac trainees about the problems of poverty-group adolescents and adults in Denver. Most were high school drop outs. All had had some brush with the law. Sever nad been detained in the county jail, Juvenile Hall, the Boy's School at Golden, Colorado, or the Girl's School at Morrison.

The problems of youth in the city are much the same as in Monte Vista. Jobs are few and frequently humiliating. Said one, "I'll never work as a busboy again. The waitresses treat you like dirt and so does everyone else. It isn't the money. That's okay. There's no respect, and the hours are too long -- ten and twelve hours a day."

Youth reported that they felt that their lack of education was a hindrance in getting the kind of work they wanted. Several were enrolled in the Employment Service's Youth Opportunity Center literacy training program. They said that they liked to learn to read and write better, and that they felt they were making progress. It was different from the public schools because no one was "calling you down."

Youth and adults alike said they felt that they were discriminated against because they were Spanish-Americans or Negros. They said that they were frequently stopped by the police for no reason, but that they were used to that. They did not think much of welfare caseworkers but then, like some teachers, there were caseworkers who were really interested and tried to help the poor.

VISTA trainees asked the basic instructors how they spent their day if they were out of school and had no jobs. The answers were non-specific and uninforming.

Fun in the City - Katabasis

In order to provide meaningful answers about what unemployed school drop outs do, a number were hired as basic instructors to show the trainees how a typical day is spent or, more accurately, how the socio-economically-deprived adolescent manages to kill a full day. Trainees and basic instructors alike were given three quarters for food and transportation. The basic instructor was asked to take three trainees with him and do whatever it was that he had done on the preceding day.

In the large city or the small rural town the typical day for a youth who is without a job, doesn't attend school, and has no money is essentially the same. The words, "dull" and "boring" are understatements of description. This is the fact that the VISTA trainees learned. The staff felt that this was an important lesson to learn, for this knowledge had immediate implications for one important area in which the VISTA volunteer could effectively serve community needs. A large group of persons who would be eager for any kind of interesting activity -- educational or recreational -- became glaringly apparent.

Trainees learned other facts too. Although there is no legal way to do it, one can ride all over Denver for only a quarter. If one knows where to go and how to confuse a waiter, it is possible to eat well for a quarter. It takes a group of persons to accomplish such confusion. There are places to go where one can get a sandwich for free if the person's story is properly presented. Five glasses of muscatel cost only seventy-five cents in the right bars.

Trainees were asked to prepare a short description of their experiences on the town with the basic instructors. A sample of the essays appears below:

Sample Essays - "Fun in the City"

Today was probably one of the most frustrating days I have ever spent. To realize that the teenagers in the poverty situation are bored to death. They don't have anything to do, can't afford to go anyway, and don't really seem to have the imagination nor appreciation to do things like visit museums or go to lectures, exhibits in town, or things like that.

Marcia Sandez, age 18 as of yesterday, goes to school, though probably because she has nothing else to do. She talks of becoming a secretary; has only three topics of conversation -- boys, records, and clothes -- and isn't very proficient in any of them; yet is really a nice girl and has a good memory. Her potential could be developed.

We spent the day walking and walking from store to store, from house to house, going nowhere, and doing nothing. We spent our seventy-five cents: twenty-five cents for the bus; twenty-five cents for food (we pooled our money and ate bread and milk); twenty-five cents for gas (we got a ride back). Everywhere we went the people were nice, but it was as if we didn't exist. They are very verbal and loud. Everything that is said is almost shouted.

But an interesting day.

* * * * * * *

After being introduced to Lucina and Janice we were taken to their homes on Arapahoe Street. Things were at first quite silent. Then the ice was broken and the talk began to flow. Lucina started kidding Janice about passing out the night before. We talked of school as we sat in a park next door to one of the girl's apartment. The girls criticized the present school system, but praised the different methods in the Catholic schools. Their only complaint of these schools was the cost.

Then we went over to a new cafe where we had lunch, played the jukebox, and talked. As the two girls were very interested in a couple of television programs, we walked back over to their house after a while and listened to them. When the programs were over, we walked a couple of blocks down to their church, which is lovely. Next we walked up to a beer joint which the girls frequent for entertainment. We were all invited back on Saturday night to join them.

* * * * * * *

Martha is an eighteen year-old girl who lives in the project housing in Denver. She left school in the eighth grade and spent thirty days in Juvenile Hall so she would not have to go back. She dropped out, not so much because she wanted to, but because there was tremendous group pressure to do so. She also felt that "the schools weren't teaching me anything I didn't already know."

The teachers "couldn't talk on my level. The nuns are the only good teachers."

Her day consists of sleeping late, eating, going to the park, watching TV at a cousin's house, talking with friends, and partying at night. For the past two weeks she has been on a binge, but "always know what I'm doing." It is an aimless existence. Beer and boys are her escape.

She seems quick and is an obvious leader. She has been accepted into Job Corps, and it will be a good thing for her. She has not held any job since she quit school and does not seem trained for anything. She is a functional illiterate. Job Corps should give her some basis from which to work and a means of being independent. It should also give her some purpose in life and make use of talents which would, under other circumstances, be wasted.

* * * * * * *

Leonard O'Brien, Bill Watters, and I left the Oxford Hotel in the company of Robert, our "guide" for the day. We were supposed to follow him and do exactly what he does in a normal day. This day, however, was far from normal for Robert He felt that it was his job to show us a good time, or in other words, babysit with three VISTA trainees for about six and a half hours. We left the hotel at 8:30am and started walking.

At first Robert didn't know where to take us, so we walked to a parking lot where one of his friends works. We talked to him for about fifteen minutes. He didn't seem to have too much respect for Robert as he kept kidding him about his knowledge of the city (which was rather small for a person who has lived in Denver for the length of time he has). We decided to visit the state capitol building and, thus, said goodbye to Thomas and started on our way.

Robert seemed very proud of "his" capitol and it appeared to me that he enjoyed very much showing us around. I liked the building very much and especially enjoyed the view from the dome.

After we finished our tour, we went to the park across the street and sat around for a little while. Our stomachs growled and we decided to eat. After lunch we went through the City and County Building and browsed through the library. Then we stopped again in the park, watching people and telling jokes, until 2:30pm when we returned to reality.

* * * * * * *

First of all Ted, Lennie, and I picked up our companion for the day and moved toward the heart of the city. We asked Robert where he lived, but he was reluctant to tell us more than a directional point. He didn't mention home at all during the time we were with him and he didn't want to take us to his neighborhood.

Robert, who is physically handicapped, is out of work. He had been to several rehabilitation classes, but quit them all. He would like to be a truck driver, but because of his handicap he cannot be one. (It involves his right hand and leg.)

On our way downtown we stopped and talked to a parking lot attendant friend of his. During the conversation we found out that Robert's sister is in a delinquent home here in the city.

Next, we walked to the park near the Capitol Building and then toured the Capitol. We also saw the library because L. . . had worked there and knew his way around. We ate lunch at a little greasy spoon up the block for about sixty-five cents.

After lunch we visited the City and County Building and talked with Robert about VISTA, YOC, jobs, Job Corps, his family, and his future. This took up most of the afternoon.

OXFORD
LIQUORS

VI.

Program Analysis

Although the University of Colorado staff have had experience in conducting short-term intensive training programs to prepare middle-class persons to work with poverty, the Monte Vista Project was still very much an experimental educational venture. All phases of the project, with the exception of the graduation ceremony, were conducted away from the carefully-controlled environment of the college campus. The use of basic instructors, eight different two-day field experiences, the night and day presence of staff, hotel living, the variety of faculty presentations -- all these and many more caused the Monte Vista Project to deviate considerably from orthodox educational activity.

The staff sought to obtain a continuing flow of data which would keep it abreast of how the community, the trainees, and the staff itself were responding to the training experience. A variety of instruments were modified or designed to obtain this information. The analysis of these instruments appears on the following pages. Schedules A through E and the Daily Log were originally designed to assess the impact of a similar training program on Employment Service personnel. With slight modification, they were thought to be appropriate for VISTA trainees. Instruments F through J were designed specifically for the second VISTA training group, based on the experience gained during the first program. The first set of schedules, the daily log, and the listening log were administered to both VISTA training groups. The second set was given only to VISTA II.

We believe that the development and modification of these simple instruments served a purpose in addition to obtaining specific information for assessing the effect of the training experiences. In order to organize an evaluation effort, staff members must make clear their assumptions that are normally taken for granted. It is surprizing how much disagreement exists in areas in which we take it for granted that there is agreement.

Many of the underlying assumptions of the training program become explicit in the analysis and interpretation of the test instruments which follow. Both anecdotal information and statistical data are presented. A word about the statistics is in order. The statistics were used simply for the purpose of summarizing vast arrays of individual scores. A computer program was available which made these efforts less time consuming. The program calculated differences in mean scores using the T-Test. When a T-Test showed a level of significance of 95% or above, we report this fact. However, by and large our interpretation of results is based on our program experience, our knowledge of the trainees, and their anecdotal responses rather than on the statistics.

Schedule A

The questionnaire which the staff designated as Schedule A was based on a scale originally developed by F. P. Kilpatrick and Hadley Cantril, known as a "self anchoring scale."*

The instrument consists of two related parts. In the first section, the respondent is asked to describe briefly the best life he can imagine and the worst life he can imagine.

In the second section the respondent is presented a series of ladder-type scales with ten steps on which the top step (number 10) represents the best life and the bottom step (number 1) represents the worst life. The participant is asked to consider several different social groups (the categories included the participants, average Anglo, unemployed Anglo, average Negro, unemployed Negro, average Spanish-American and unemployed Spanish-America), and circle the number on the scale which, in his opinion, represents the life situation of the specific group at the present time.

The purpose of the open-ended questions in Section I of the instrument is to provide the respondent with a personal referent or baseline to have in mind as he judges the life situation of the different social groups in Section II, thereby avoiding confusion or meaningless random responses.

The instrument was given during the first and last weeks of the Monte Vista Project, and the before and after responses were compared to determine if any changes in descriptions of the best and worst life or in the rating of life situations of various groups could be detected.

The questionnaire and several examples of the before and after responses to Section I which are typical and selected at random appear on the following pages.

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*"Self Anchoring Scaling: A Measure of Individual's Unique Reality World," Journal of Individual Psychology, Volume 16, 1960.

Name ______________________________ Schedule A

University of Colorado
The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

1. Everybody wants certain things in life. Think about what really matters to _you_, then describe below the _best_ life you can imagine, assuming you could have everything just as you want it.

2. Now think of the kind of life you would _not_ want. Describe the _worst_ life you can imagine.

3. Pictured below is a series of "ladders," each with 10 steps. Step 10 represents "the best life" and Step 1 represents "the worst life." For each of the following, circle the number of the step you judge to reflect the present situation.

a. Where I stand at the present time.
b. Where the average Anglo living in ______________ stands.
c. Where the chronically unemployed Anglo in ______________ stands.
d. Where the average Negro living in ______________ stands.
e. Where the chronically unemployed Negro in ______________ stands.
f. Where the average Spanish-surname person living in ______________ stands.
g. Where the chronically unemployed Spanish-surname person in __________________ stands.

	A I stand	B Aver. Anglo	C Unempl. Anglo	D Aver. Negro	E Unempl. Negro	F Aver. Spanish	G Unempl. Spanish
Best life	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Worst life	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

The Best Life - Worst Life, Before and After Responses

Example 1:

Best Life - Before

Primarily it would be an education and, as a result of this, would come a vocation that was satisfying and challenging. A secure family structure which economically would not be threatened. Leisure would be important -- time to learn really who you are, what you want, and know what you as an individual can achieve.

Worst Life - Before

To be unaware of myself as a human and without understanding of the "whys" and "hows" of human reactions. This would also, I suppose, include being uneducated. Being a part of a family situation that was always being threatened (separations, economic situations that would break up the family structure) and to be so poorly equipped that one just moves through life rather than living it. Also to be unable to develop a sense of pride in myself and my family because I am agency-supported. Also of primary importance, to be constantly threatened by external situations which I cannot understand or control.

Best Life - After

I would want an education that would allow me to be well prepared for a job I thought was creative and challenging. This would also include financial security, as life would be very difficult with constant threats (job loss, financial insolvency, inability to pay emergency expenses, etc.). A family situation in which there was mutual trust and respect and one in which there was enough strength and support (love as well as financial security) so that an emergency situation would not weaken the relationship and disintegrate the family structure.

Worst Life - After

A life of part-time jobs, of just getting by, where employers take advantage of your ignorance and situation. Where you have been just educated enough so that you know that there is a better way of life, but you are unable to grasp the "hows" of achieving a better life. A life of watching one's family live poorly where they always settle for mere necessity -- and sometimes less. A life in which one must be humbled by people and agencies one does not really understand.

Example 2:

Best Life - Before

The best life would be doing work that would be satisfactory in that I could see individuals growing and maturing. In this growth I would be an integral part (I would grow myself). I would have such a relationship with those individuals that I could inter-relate into their lives, and I would therefore understand them and their circumstances. I would also like time to reflect on these individuals, their lives, and how they related to me. Just being and working with people would be the best life for me. This is a general concept I realize.

Worst Life - Before

The worst life would be doing a job and living a life that would not include contact with people almost constantly, such as working with machines either in a factory or in an office. Also a job that was repetitious, such as filing or typing. The fact that I would finish a job completely would be gratifying, but the next day doing the same work would be defeating. This would be the only thing that would make life miserable, I believe.

Best Life - After

The thing that really matters to me now is attempting to convey to the middle-class society what poverty is -- assuming that I know something about it. I would like to live with the poor people and shake up the middle class. I want to feel what these people are feeling. I want to share with them because through that I become a much more sensitive and charitable person -- I will grow. I want to be a part of these people.

Worst Life - After

I believe that going back to the confining middle-class society would be the most frustrating thing I could do -- at least right now. I have felt a freedom here which is truly wonderful. I believe this has been, and will be, a very profitable time in my life. Things are happening to me. Also, going back to a routine (as in school teaching) and working with people who have few outside interests would be extremely frustrating.

Example 3:

Best Life - Before

I am interested in gaining first-hand information so that I might be one who can speak from experience. At the same time I would like to be in a position to continually increase my capacity for understanding and tolerance. I would like to be in such a position. I would like to be in a position to travel extensively as I believe travel is broadening. I would like to extend myself not only as an individual but as a citizen of the United States. If, while doing these things mentioned above, I might also help another toward his goal, I am certain I would feel some personal satisfaction.

Worst Life - Before

The worst life that I can imagine would be a life where free expression would be hampered. If this would be coupled with a situation in which I had the desire to do or be something which I was economically or intellectually incapable of, I am afraid the frustration would be difficult for me.

Best Life - After

The best life would include the desire and opportunity to provide meaningful first-person guidance to the one who is in some way deprived. It would include the opportunity for advancement in my job in a twofold way: (1) in my capability of doing something for others and (2) in economic advancement. This would include a continually stimulating environment and an opportunity to actively respond to it.

Worst Life - After

The worst life I can imagine: living under a closed opportunity system where free expression was hampered, particularly if coupled with being raised in an environment where lack of aspiration is a consequence. To have a closed system and a closed mind would be terrible.

Example 4:

Best Life - Before

I think, in my case, I would leave things as they are. The best way to live is to work for and plan the things you want most. Thus, in achievement we attain a level of happiness. When "happiness" is handed to you, it somehow loses its value. Consequently, the idea of the best life that I can imagine (which, of course, has been established through my past experiences) is, perhaps, not material abundance, but rather a feeling of accomplishment in what I have attained. However, I would have to keep in mind the thoughts and needs of others and work with those close to me. For one can't be happy alone.

Worst Life - Before

Surprisingly enough, I don't believe economic poverty is the worst life possible. I believe a psychological poverty is much worse. I believe I would be the saddest person if I were psychologically, socially, spiritually deprived of love. One can have an abundance of wealth and still be in dire poverty from within. The "poor little rich kid" is an example of this. For instance, an only child with divorced parents who travels from her mother's Palm Beach home to her father's Paris apartment. I guess I'm just simple -- but a person needs people who love.

Best Life - After

I would think the best life would contain a moderate degree of material wealth. Enough so that you would not have to worry about financial decisions and so that you could be yourself. In being yourself you could do what you want, without outside pressures. I still hold that love is also first in importance, however. A person must be able to love, and receive it, to experience himself fully.

Worst Life - After

Before I said that a "poor little rich boy" who was deprived of love would be living the worst life. However, after these weeks I have seen many "poor little poor boys" in the same predicament, which must be even worse. A person who is deprived of love, money, security, and future must live the worst life.

Example 5:

Best Life - Before

Of all the many things that I would select as "musts" for a best life, there seem to be three or four main "musts". First in importance is good health -- a disease-free existence. By health I mean both physical well being and personal cleanliness and a mental state that is in harmony with whatever tasks must be performed. Education is one of the necessities in my formula for a good life. Education in a book way which includes a high school education and a college education, but also education to make understanding possible. Education for my children is also a must. It seems that education makes attitudes and beliefs that lead to healthy circumstances and these must begin in early life. Of course, I feel that one must have an area in which he can be assured of income, but the amount of income is not of major importance.

Worst Life - Before

I think that the worst possible life would be void of something to learn. Without even a desire to learn, it seems that all else which might contribute to a good life is lost. Also I think that disease would be one of the worst aspects -- part of a life I wouldn't want. A life of disease and unsanitary conditions would make a life filled with hardship and unhappiness.

Best Life - After

I think the most important aspect of the best life would be to be a healthy, living person with a healthy family. It really doesn't matter where a healthy family lives, for with health a family's problems are small. The next most important aspect of a best life would be education -- not just book education either. It seems as though an individual's awareness of his family and of the world in which he must exist is as important as college. An education to a clear set of values is also a necessary aspect of total education. I believe security economically is also important in my best life, for without this it must be quite difficult to live what might be considered my ideal life.

Worst Life - After

The life I would not want is one in which there would be no personal dignity and no means by which to attain this. The worst life possible would be one in which I could not breathe freely, knowing that there was a prejudice against me. This worst life would probably have no opportunity for me and my family and friends. The lack of education would probably lead to unhealthy conditions.

Example 6:

Best Life - Before

The most essential ingredient in a happy life to me would be having something -- some cause -- to believe in and work for -- something bigger than one's self. This would provide life with a purpose and drive. The two other essentials would be having loved ones with whom to share your triumphs and agonies, and having at least a minimal standard of existence.

Worst Life - Before

I can't think of anything worse than having a dull, meaningless, unchallenging job that one cares nothing about, and then after spending a third or more of one's day at that job, come home and watch "Bonanza" and such on TV. Such a life would be totally devoid of cause, challenge, and opportunity.

Best Life - After

The most important thing in life is an opportunity for service -- to engage in activities that are basic to the well-being of our fellowman. A loving family is an essential component and also a job which you feel is productive and worthwhile. But underlying all of this must be a degree of economic security and well-being or none of the above will be possible.

Worst Life - After

A life alone, in grinding poverty (with the anxiety, humiliation, and insecurity that goes with it) without hope, without opportunity for advancement, and a job that is at best dull and mechanical.

Interpretation of Section I - Schedule A

The analysis of the before and after responses to "what is the best life?" shows a trend away from an expressed desire for individualism as an ideal, and toward the idea of applying one's self to the solution of problems in a service capacity. Strong notions of the need for personal freedom are still present in the after responses, but this expressed need for freedom is for the purpose of helping others rather than simply developing one's talents as an end in itself. For many trainees the training program was probably the beginning of a year-long period of career testing. This is suggested by comments of this sort: "I am more certain than ever that social work is the field for me" and "I believe that helping others is now the most important aspect of my best life."

Differences in the before and after responses to the "worst life" show the influence of both classroom lectures and direct contact with persons living in poverty. A new vocabulary characterized by the words "opportunity structure" appears frequently in the after responses and not at all before the training experience. For many trainees the recognition of the hopeless desperation of the poor, struggling against a relatively closed opportunity system, becomes a salient feature of the worst life.

Statements such as, "everyone should have a chance to a better life" and "equal opportunity for all people," demonstrate the awareness that poverty people, and particularly their children, don't have the same chance to develop abilities or aspirations as do persons with middle-class origins.

The staff had anticipated that more concern for family stability would be expressed in the descriptions of the best and worst life than actually appeared. The absence of a parent as a result of early death, divorce, or desertion, is too frequent a pattern among poverty groups to be ignored. In previous use of the same instrument with another group, the emphasis on family disorganization as one of the crucial factors in the worst life was marked. The previous group was composed of Employment Service personnel who were for the most part married and considerably older on the average. Apparently the majority of VISTA trainees do not anticipate marriage in the immediate future and, as a consequence, do not place much emphasis on family relations in either the best or worst life descriptions. The young average age of the training groups may also provide some clues regarding the emphasis on individualism, which though it takes a new direction following the training experience, is still particularly strong.

A tendency to intellectualize feelings about poverty appear in both before and after responses to a greater degree than had been expected. We suspect that this may be an artifact of the test instrument for this particular population. Most trainees were attending or had just graduated from college prior to entering VISTA. We believe that they responded to this instrument as a typical college test, for individual and small group discussions displayed far more emotional involvement than their answers here suggest.

In summary, the trainees described the "best life" as one in which they could be free to develop and express themselves creatively. After the six-week training experience they had become concerned with not only their own well-being, but with the future of other people, especially those less fortunate than they. They began to see themselves as instrumental agents -- responsible persons who could be in a position to open the opportunity structure for those who live in poverty. To be able to get such a task done, they felt that they would have to have jobs in which they could be in direct contact with the poor.

The before responses on the "worst life" showed that the VISTA's thought it rather horrible to lose their individualism and creativity. After training they realized that there was more to the "worst life" than just being uncreative. They recognized that regardless of how strongly motivated he is and regardless of how much an economically-deprived person applies himself, he will still fail to achieve a better life if the opportunity structure is not changed.

Interpretation of Section II - Schèdule A

VISTA trainees were asked to rate the positions of several social groups, including themselves, in relation to the life situations they described in Part I. Program planners had assumed that participants would recognize that each of the groups to be rated would be significantly lower on the life-situation scale than the trainees themselves. Further, it was assumed that the trainees would view the relative life situations of minority groups, both employed and unemployed, as less favorable than their own. Planners did not have any information about the trainees prior to their arrival in Denver, but since the purpose of the program was to give the trainees a deeper understanding of persons who exist in the culture of poverty, it was hoped that irrespective of their preexisting knowledge the program could give them useful information on the subject. Additional information should lead the trainees to perceive a greater disparity between their life situation and the life situation of the other groups. Thus, if the trainees did obtain additional information about poverty, and particularly poverty in minority groups, the scale distance between themselves and these groups would be expected to increase when their before and after responses were compared.

The VISTA's ratings were punched on IBM cards and fed into a computer with a program which calculated mean ($\overline{x}$) scores for each category on the before and after questionnaires. The program also computed the statistical significance of differences between categories and the significance of changes between the before and after responses.

Tables (1) and (2) report the mean ($\overline{x}$) scores of both training groups based on their ranking of life styles of the different social categories on a scale of from one to ten. While the scale does appear to show that trainees clearly recognize the difference in life style among the various categories (see Tables (3), (4), (5), and (6)), their scores show no significant difference in their view of the relative positions of these groups before and after the training.

The staff had expected changes in the relative scale positions of the Negro and the Spanish-American. The majority of the trainees came from areas in which they had little or no direct contact with Spanish-surnamed persons. We had expected that prior to the program the Spanish-American life style would have been rated higher than the Negro. Following training, we would have expected the ranking to have been reversed, since there was little contact with the Negro in poverty and much contact with the Spanish-American. However, based on this particular scale, VISTA trainees did not differentiate between average Negros and Spanish-Americans or between unemployed Negros and Spanish-Americans, either before or after the training program. The pattern which emerges from this analysis is that trainees in VISTA I rated themselves above the average Anglo in terms of life style. VISTA II trainees ranked themselves the same as the average Anglo. Both groups saw themselves above the remaining categories. Both groups rate unemployed status low, while giving a slight edge to the unemployed Anglo over the other two categories. On the after responses, the unemployed Anglo drops below the average Spanish-American and Negro for both groups. (Tables (4) and (6)).

It is worth noting that the rankings produced by the VISTA trainees are very similar to those produced by Employment Service personnel who have been working with poverty people for many years. This suggests that prior to the program, the VISTA trainees had a fairly accurate perception of the relative life styles of the different groups. The training program caused no discernible change in this perception.

Trainees Mean Ratings of Relative Life Situations

		TABLE (1) VISTA I (N=60)			TABLE (2) VISTA II (N=28)		
	Category	$\overline{X}$ Before	$\overline{X}$ After	Change*	$\overline{X}$ Before	$\overline{X}$ After	Change*
1	I Stand	7.700	7.633	-	7.643	7.393	-
2	Average Anglo	6.450	6.617	+	6.893	6.893	0
3	Unemployed Anglo	3.767	4.000	+	4.107	3.607	-
4	Average Negro	4.717	4.750	+	5.071	4.714	-
5	Unemployed Negro	2.683	2.767	+	2.643	2.214	-
6	Average Spanish	4.933	4.817	-	4.429	4.964	+
7	Unemployed Spanish	2.600	2.667	+	2.786	2.714	-

* a plus indicates that the direction of change is toward a higher estimate of the life situation in the category.

Tables (3), (4), (5), and (6) compare the differences between the various social categories trainees were asked to rate. Since these tables are slightly confusing at first glance, a brief explanation may be useful. The tables should be read down the column rather than across the rows. Reading down the first column of Table (3) it can be seen that the trainees as a group (I Stand) rate their life situation as higher than that of all other groups considered.

Reading down the columns in Tables (3) and (4) it can be seen that after the six-weeks training, the VISTA I group shows no change. Reading down Column 2 (Average Anglo) it can be seen that Average Anglo ranks below I Stand, but above all other categories. In reading down the Unemployed Anglo column it can be seen that they scored the Average Negro and the Average Spanish-American higher than the Unemployed Anglo.

In reading down the I Stand column of Table (6) it can be seen that the VISTA II group did not change significantly. However, they did rate the life situation of the Average Anglo the same as theirs. But the Unemployed Spanish American was rated to have about the same life situation as the Unemployed Anglo. As can be seen in reading down the Average Spanish-American column the Unemployed Anglo was rated significantly lower than the Average Spanish-America.

In summary, it appears that the trainees in VISTA I viewed the life situation of both minority groups about the same on both the before and after questionnaires. On the other hand, VISTA II rated the life situation of the unemployed minorities and the Unemployed Anglo lower on the after questionnaire. They also scored the life situation of the Unemployed Anglo to be about the same as the Unemployed Spanish-American.

Schedule C

Schedule C was designed by the staff for the explicit purpose of determining whether or not behavioral science content presented during the Monte Vista Project was in fact discovered by the individual student. For this purpose a test was designed which measured his learning at the end of the project against his perceptions at the beginning.

In each behavioral science discipline there are certain fundamental notions which carry such powerful implications that if they are accepted or rejected, a vast constellation of particularistic or specific facts are affected and take on new meanings. One may use as an example of such a basic or primitive notion the developmental theory of Freud. If one accepts the idea that the human personality is basically and rigidly determined by the time a child is six or seven years old, this acceptance may have a profound effect on one's notions about what can be done with an eighteen year old high school drop out.

In a curriculum as broad as that designed for the Monte Vista Project there were literally thousands of ideas presented. There were probably several hundred underlying notions upon which these ideas are founded. The staff formulated ten simple statements of primitives which were considered exceptionally important among those which were to be presented. The simple statements were then reformulated in such a way that the favorable response would not appear obvious. The statements were then prepared as a questionnaire for before and after testing of participants.

The results of this testing are presented on the following pages. The first statement is the basic notion or primitive formulated by the planners. The second statement is the reformulated notion. The before and after responses of the students are reported; examples of their open ended responses are shown; and a brief interpretation is given.

TABLE (3)

Difference Between Means Among Social Categories
Before Questionnaire (N=60)

VISTA I

	I Stand	Av. Ang.	Un. Ang.	Av. Neg.	Un. Neg.	Av. S-A	Un. S-A
I Stand	--	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower	Lower*
Av. Ang.	Higher*	--	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower	Lower*
Un. Ang.	Higher*	Higher*	--	Higher*	Lower*	Higher	Lower*
Av. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	Lower*	--	Lower*	( )	Lower*
Un. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	--	Higher*	( )
Av. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	Lower*	( )	Lower*	--	Lower*
Un. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	Higher	( )	Higher	--

TABLE (4)

Difference Between Means Among Social Categories
After Questionnaire (N=60)

VISTA I

	I Stand	Av. Ang.	Un. Ang.	Av. Neg.	Un. Neg.	Av. S-A	Un. S-A
I Stand	--	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*
Av. Ang.	Higher*	--	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*
Un. Ang.	Higher*	Higher*	--	Higher**	Lower*	Higher*	Lower*
Av. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	Lower**	--	Lower*	( )	Lower*
Un. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	--	Higher*	( )
Av. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	Lower*	( )	Lower*	--	Lower*
Un. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	( )	Higher*	--

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* T Significant = .001
** T Significant = .01

TABLE (5)

Difference Between Means Among Social Categories
Before Questionnaire (N=28)

VISTA II

	I Stand	Av. Ang.	Un. Ang.	Av. Neg.	Un. Neg.	Av. S-A	Un. S-A
I Stand	--	( )	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*
Av. Ang.	( )	--	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*
Un. Ang.	Higher*	Higher*	--	( )	Lower*	( )	Lower*
Av. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	( )	--	Lower*	( )	Lower*
Un. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	--	Higher*	( ))
Av. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	( )	( )	Lower*	--	Lower*
Un. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	( )	Higher*	--

TABLE (6)

Difference Between Means Among Social Categories
After Questionnaire (N=28)

VISTA II

	I Stand	Av. Ang.	Un. Ang.	Av. Neg.	Un. Neg.	Av. S-A	Un. S-A
I Stand	--	( )	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*
Av. Ang.	( )	--	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*	Lower*
Un. Ang.	Higher*	Higher*	--	Higher**	Lower*	Higher**	( )
Av. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	Lower**	--	Lower*	( )	Lower
Un. Neg.	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	Higher*	--	Higher*	( )
Av. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	Lower**	( )	Lower*	--	Lower*
Un. S-A	Higher*	Higher*	( )	Higher*	( )	Higher*	--

---

* T Significant = .001
** T Significant = .01

Primitive

Given certain conditions a person's character can change or be changed at any age.

Reformulation

1. A person's character is set in his early years of life and can hardly be changed in later life. For example, "a child who is lazy when he is 6 years old will be lazy when he is 21 or even 45 or 60." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	8	1
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	52	27

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	4	2
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	56	26

Typical Responses

Before

"I agree. Defining character as the attitudes and values upon which a person acts, I would say that these are determined by behavior patterns established early in life. They can be overcome by conscious effort, but in most cases this effort is not exerted. In other words, the fight against poverty must begin with a change in the outlook of the child."

After

"I disagree. If a new opportunity is offered, the pattern of behavior will change."

Before

"Basically yes. A person's character is formed in his early years. Since the average person continues his life in basically the same environment, he will not change radically. Then again the potential characteristics any person has are not always evident until a specific experience draws them out and modifies them."

After

"I disagree. A person's character will change according to the strength of influences placed on him throughout his life. This is especially true regarding chacteristics such as being lazy. The basic personality traits are formed in a young age, but environment has a great deal to do with what traits emerge and how strongly they emerge."

Before

"Disagree. It has been found that in the teenage years and in the college years that values and attitudes can be changed either through education or self-growth or change in the person himself. Often there would have to be motivation to want to change."

After

"Disagree. Through government programs for young people 16 through 21 years of age, it has been proven that people will pull themselves up when there is an opportunity to do so. In Monte Vista hope was low because opportunity was low."

Before

"Disagree. A person's characteristic tendencies and attitudes are formed in his early years, but these continue to mold a character long after childhood. I think persons' characters can and do change, even though they still possess the same basic tendencies from childhood."

After

"Disagree. I think a child forms certain tendencies, but I am certain that these can be directed by the environmental situations and pressures of later life."

Comment

VISTA trainees as a group rejected the deterministic notion that character or personality is rigidly formed at an early age. The consensus on this item was so complete, that there was virtually no room for change in the direction of greater acceptance of the primitive.

Primitive

Our present federal, state and local governmental systems are sufficiently flexible that the economic problems confronting us day by day can be solved within the existing framework.

Reformulation

2. "It will be virtually impossible to substantially reduce poverty in this country without large-scale social change. Existing bureaucratic organizations in welfare, employment, and education must be given up in favor of some entirely new structure capable of handling the problem." Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	17	10
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	43	18

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	11	4
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	49	24

Typical Responses

Before

"I disagree with this statement because if the existing welfare organizations were inadequate, there never would have been the stimulation for a program like VISTA."

After

"I agree with this statement even though when I first took this test, I said I disagreed. After working on placements at the welfare and public health departments, I see how bureaucratic an agency can become."

Before

"Agree. Though VISTA is an arm of a bureaucratic form of government, the program is generating more and more furor and awakening the conscience of America. Eventually it will bring about the large-scale social changes necessary for a reduction in poverty."

After

"Disagree. What a dilemma! It would be wonderful if bureaucracies could be eliminated for their red tape, but we can't have our pie and eat it too -- bureaucracies, like the U.S. government, have what it takes -- the money."

Before

"The existing bureaucractic organizations can be made to work with internal changes in philosophies, purposes, and organization."

After

"Disagree. I don't think an entirely new structure need be formed to handle the poverty program. Awareness on the part of the community is more important. New methods of dealing with poverty must be initiated, but an entirely new structure is not necessary."

Before

"Disagree. I do not believe a new structure is needed, but definitely there should be a continual evaluation and changes within an existing structure to meet the changing needs of society."

After

"Disagree. If giving up means totally dropping these organizations and starting anew, then I totally disagree. Large-scale social changes must be made, but more in terms of enacting the spirits of the law rather than giving up laws. It is the spirit of the law that must be eternally revived, rather than simply changing the written laws. A greater understanding on the part of the public and flexibility on the part of the agencies is required."

Comment

Trainees' response changes in what the staff considers a favorable direction, although the change is not statistically significant. The training emphasized the problems of bureaucratic rigidity, but suggested strategies for modification and expansion of limits within the systems rather than their destruction. Further, ideas for the creation of complementary or parallel systems (e.g., Youth Opportunity Centers which can work with youth who are pushed out of the public schools) were proposed as alternatives to revolutionary change. We interpret the change in response to indicate that the program supported the idea of the primitive.

Primitive

Primary group relationships (family, close friends) are exceedingly influential in determining an individual's aspirations and ultimate success in finding and keeping a job; such relationships are perhaps more important than other objective conditions in the community.

Reformulation

3. The poverty of most families in a rural environment is due to the employment market, lack of skills, training and formal education rather than to the informal group relationships of the unemployed person (home life, influence of parent and close friends, recreation activities.) Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	30	15
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	27	13

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	39	21
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	21	7

Typical Responses

Before
"Disagree. I think both factors are equally important and related closely. When one occurs the other one does too. Both contribute to the poverty of these families."

After
"I think most families are poor because of lack of skills, training, and formal education rather than because of group relationships. I think the first set of factors greatly outweighs the second."

Before
"Disagree. I believe that group relations are the basic causes of the employment market -- "causes" may be too strong a word. But the employment market is more a symptom of emotional and group relations even though all are connected in a vicious circle."

After
"Agree. Although all areas discussed in the above statement may be true, the main cause of poverty is due to the employment market, lack of skills, training, and formal education."

Before
"I disagree with this statement because the home-life aspect is one of the major factors in determining social and deviant behavior. Your personal and group relationships display your outlook on life."

After
"I disagree because, after surveying the family structures of the Spanish-Americans in Monte Vista, personal relationships have a good deal of influence on whether or not a person will find a way to get out of poverty."

Before

"Agree. I believe that it is obvious that the economic conditions and educational situation affect a person's life, since values are determined to a great extent (if money is needed to live tomorrow it is of great importance) by these factors."

After

"Disagree. These two areas or sectors of a person's environment are too closely interrelated to say that one acts as the cause and the other does not."

Comment

While primary relationships were understood by the trainees to be extremely important, the concept of opportunity structure and the practical problems of the job market appear to have pretty well overshadowed the role of primary relationships in the responses to this statement.

Primitive

Minority groups are in poverty because they refuse to accept the major values of the dominant middle-class society.

Reformulation

4. "A major factor which keeps the Spanish-American or Puerto Rican in a poverty condition is the unique cultural heritage which each group wishes to preserve." Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	16	8
No Answer	0	1
Disagree	44	19

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	12	3
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	48	25

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. Although their cultural heritage is rich and should be preserved, it holds them behind. The lack of knowledge of English in many cases keeps them at a disadvantage. The values of their inheritance don't always conform to the American middle-class values with which they must compete. The "mañana" attitude does not help them in the United States."

After

"Agree. To a large extent their values of interdependence, sharing, and many other commendable values keep the group from effectively competing with the middle-class society."

Before

"I agree with this statement because every person, whether he wishes to or not, has a certain respect for his cultural heritage. At times this may go to extremes, but pride in his heritage never hurt anyone."

After

"I disagree with this statement although I answered it in the positive before. After working among the Spanish-Americans I find them, particularly the younger generation, to be quite hesitant about preserving their cultural heritage. They are more in favor of becoming Americanized -- television sets, cars, etc."

Before

"Agree. Rather it is our lack of acceptance of this cultural heritage -- these people felt they were not being stripped of their identities and were being accepted as they were -- assimilation into a new way of life would be smoother and healthier."

After

"Disagree. The holding onto unique cultural heritages does not, I believe, keep these people in poverty; it is rather a defense against the poverty, or better yet, it appears to be stronger because of poverty. If these people were not in poverty, their cultural heritage might still appear, but we then could not label it as a barrier to their success."

Before

"Agree. The unique cultural heritage influences particularly the delinquency of Spanish-Americans and I assume it is also a major factor in the poverty of these people. I am rather vague about the way in which cultural heritage influences poverty, but the delinquent is directly related. In certain cases the age sixteen is the time when the Spanish-American becomes a man. For a year or two the boy is expected to drink, smoke, and do exciting things. Since he lacks education as a value after sixteen, he does not have the cultural tradition which causes him to remain in school after sixteen."

After

"I disagree. Culture might be a minor factor -- family ties, lack of mobility, and the Spanish language help to hold the people down -- but other factors are more important.

Comment

The belief that the lower class has different values from the middle class or that some cultures have virtues which are superior to those of middle-class society is widely held. Evidence for this position as well as the contrary position were presented to trainees. Perhaps the argument is irrelevant in terms of Spanish-Americans in the San Luis Valley. The general conclusion of trainees was that there was no culture for the poverty group to hold on to. The response shows a trend toward rejection of the idea embodied in the primitive.

Primitive

Recent research has re-emphasized the importance of peer group or reference group on its members. The attitudes of a young person cannot be understood simply by understanding his home environment or his individual personality characteristics.

Reformulation

5. "An explanation of the idleness patterns among the youth in a poverty area of a city must take account of peer group behavior as influenced by their sub-cultures; i.e., their norms of behavior. The idleness of youth can not be adequately explained by the home environment, personality factors, or the job market." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	25	8
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	35	20

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	22	11
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	38	17

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. The sub-cultures are very important in the lives of boys. The Provo, Utah experiment carried this idea to the extreme. I do not feel you can understand young people without studying peer group relations."

After

"Agree. The peer group is very important to young people, especially those whose parents are not close to them. They want to behave in a pattern favorable to the group, and this could influence idleness patterns."

Before

"Disagree. The roots of idleness of youth must be explained by home environment and personality factors. If self-confidence is not gained at home, it will be sought after in superficial roles or will be given up completely and, thus, the individual will fall into idleness patterns."

After

"Agree. Home environment, personality factors, or the job market may have a great deal to do with the idleness patterns among youth in that it is these things which aid in placing youth in the peer groups he enters, but the behavior of these groups is dictated by their sub-culture."

Before

"The idleness of youth goes back to the home environment. If the home doesn't give him a push, he is unlikely to become molded into an ambitious person."

After

"Disagree. This is still not true. A youth's idleness is due to his home environment and the job market. If a child sees his brother as an addict and his father as a drunk, he won't see too much for himself. It's easier to follow the pattern than to struggle for something different."

Before

"Agree. Peer influence and behavioral norms play a definite part in idleness patterns, for in general personal behavior is aimed at peer sanctioning. Then again, what is it that forms these norms of behavior among poor youth? Aren't they an indirect result of home environment, personality factors, etc.?"

After

"Agree. Here again, I don't think that two factors can be separated or blamed alone. I think that home environment, personality, and the job market do result in youth's idleness, which in turn results in their normative behavior -- conforming to these norms which give that necessary sense of achievement and belonging."

Comment:

The reformulation of this particular primitive is unfortuantely technical and complex. The responses to the agree-disagree section do not adequately represent the views of the trainees as described further in the open-ended answers. The scores indicate the trainees underestimate the important influence of peer group relationships. Open-ended questions suggest that they do not.

Primitive

The human being is sufficiently flexible that he can be taught a continuing series of new kinds of jobs as technological change makes his old knowledge and skills obsolete.

Reformulation

6. "To meet the demands of a rapidly changing technology, the average man in the labor market can, and must, learn new jobs as old ones are eliminated. A rapid change in work roles presents no particular adjustment problem." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	7	4
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	53	24

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	3	4
No Answer	2	0
Disagree	55	24

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. True, a single job skill is always a poor risk and is in danger of being changed, combined, or eliminated."

After

"Disagree. Rapid change in work roles always presents a problem when that change is not planned by the worker. A single-skill worker becomes the dirt upon which the wheels of industry roll."

Before

"Agree. The problem seems to be more of getting the facilities to undertake the re-training and then getting these people motivated to attempt the change. It seems once the "willingness" is established, the other adjustments will come because of an initial change in attitude."

After

"Disagree. A change in work roles for those people living in poverty would, for most, change their whole life pattern, since most have never been particularly trained for any job."

Before

"Disagree. People become adjusted to work roles and any major change will create anxiety and adjustment problems. Once a person gets set in his patterns, it is very difficult to change. He must learn new roles and it is especially difficult for older men."

After

"Agree. I agree that automation destroys old jobs and creates the need for new skills to be developed. It is, however, very difficult to adjust to changes in work roles. When you and your father have been trained in only one skill, the mental and physical strain of a new role is great."

Comment

As in the case of the previous item, the reformulation does not reflect the simple meaning of the primitive. The open-ended answers show that the trainees accept the idea of human flexibility and reject the notion that job re-training is easily accomplished.

Primitive

Environment is more influential in determining human behavior than inherited or innate characteristics.

Reformulation

7. "The influence of a person's natural drive and ambition is more important in explaining his chronic unemployment than the influence of his immediate social situation (his relationships with his peers and family, his patterns of security and recreation, etc.). A change in social situation cannot be expected to affect one's drive or ambition." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	13	8
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	47	20

After Response

	Vista I*	Vista II
Agree	5	3
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	55	25

---

* Change significant at .05 level T = 2.032 DF = 105

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. If a person has the ambition and drive he should be able to better himself despite his social situations."

After

"Disagree. I think that his environment is a bigger factor in explaining his unemployment. A person who has dropped out of school will find it harder to get a job than a person who has completed school and is lazy."

Before

"Agree. If a person has a good social situation but has no goal, drive, or ambition, he can't go very far. But with these things in a person's favor there is always hope because he himself has it."

After

"Disagree. If a person's family could have been able to give the person something better in life, the person could have acquired ambition. But in that they were not able to provide a stimulating environment, the person finds himself without ambition or drive."

Before

"Disagree. I feel a person's drive and ambition reflect his relationships with his family. If a man has strong relationships with his family and wants security, than he will be sufficiently motivated to find a job."

After

"Agree. I think that ambition and drive are related to motivation and that some motivation to work comes from a desire to do things with your employed peers and to support your family. However, after you've been unemployed and defeated so many times, you begin to lose your drive and ambition. Peer relationships and family ties remain , but now it is the lack of drive and ambition and the defeated attitude that will keep you unemployed."

Before

"Disagree. Natural ambition and drive merge with the present social situation and form a relationship between each other with each influencing the other indirectly."

After

"Agree. A person finds no walls when his mind is set and he wants that dream. No matter what happens around him the focal point of desire is stronger than anything else."

Comment

The majority of trainees accepted this primitive prior to the program. At least thirteen trainees appear to have changed their view during the program. This particular belief is of obvious importance if a person is to accept personal responsibility for helping the poor. We interpret the change to indicate that the program successfully communicated this particular idea to the thirteen trainees who changed their response pattern.

Primitive

Poverty exists because the middle class is unaware of it.

Reformulation

8. "The main reason that our poverty problems have not been effectively dealt with in the United States is that the dominant middle class is unaware of, or does not understand, the causes and extent of poverty."

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	50	25
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	10	3

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	55	27
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	5	1

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. I agree basically because these people don't want to know the causes and extent of poverty. They find excuses for not knowing why. Therefore, they are unaware of the scope of the problem."

After

"Disagree. They are aware. They know the causes -- themselves being one of them. They don't want to know."

Before

"Agree. The majority of the people in the middle class are unaware of the causes and extent of poverty, while the others do not want to be involved."

After

"Disagree. Poverty will not be dealt with effectively until all classes of people are made aware of the poverty which which the lower class of people live. The causes and the extent of poverty has to be shown to the middle class."

Before

"Disagree. The middle class is constantly aware of poverty. They themselves fear poverty and see it everyday. The problem is lack of real interest until it strikes home. However, I do agree with the lack of understanding."

After

"Agree. Unaware! Yes, unaware in the respect that if I don't mention it then it will go away. Ignore it and there is no problem. Forget it and I don't have to be bothered with trying to understand the problem and the source of the problem."

Before

"Disagree. They do know and are aware, but do not know how to go about combating it."

After

"Agree. Many people just do not comprehend poverty, and if they do they shut their minds to it."

Comment

The belief that poverty exists because of ignorance and lack of understanding is particularly important to the role of the VISTA volunteer. We assume that the posture associated with this belief is a useful one for the volunteer to have. The contrary belief presumes the existence of a middle-class conspiratorial design which not only has no basis in fact but places the adherence into direct conflict with middle-class leadership. The small but favorable change is interpreted to be a result of learning during the training program.

Primitive

Chronic social problems can seldom be understood or explained by reference to individual differences. In order to understand or solve a chronic social problem, one must look to the social system in which the problem occurs rather than to the individual who is influenced by that system.

Reformulation

9. "The problem of chronic unemployment and poverty in this country is largely the fault of our culture's way of causing and handling it (i.e., the fault of the 'system' as a whole) rather than the fault of individuals. A substantial solution to the problem can be accomplished with appropriate changes in the system." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

	Before Response		After Response	
	Vista I	Vista II	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	38	17	46	21
No Answer	0	0	0	0
Disagree	22	11	14	7

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. Poverty couldn't be the fault of individuals. When a large segment of our population can't get along and doesn't care, then our whole culture has lacked something."

After

"Disagree. I don't think we can really say that our 'system' has failed. I really believe that the problem lies with the individual. Individuals who discriminate are a problem as are those who quit. The whole culture can not be blamed."

Before

"Agree. This is true because in order to be successful in our society, one must act a certain way, attain a certain level in any job (predetermined by industry and business). It does not take into account other cultures and customs, and wants workers to conform to middle-class culture."

After

"Disagree. Individuals are part of the system and can change it."

Before

"Disagree. Systems are groups or patterns of individuals."

After

"Agree. One individual has little effect upon a total social situation. However, a group of individuals comprises a very powerful system, hence the problem is one of deciding how far back to carry the cause-effect relationship."

Before

"Disagree. Man isn't perfect and he is doing the best he can. If there was a better way to do things and our country could afford it, they'd do it. As of now, they are doing a pretty good job."

After

"Agree. I agree because we human beings tend to be self-centered and only look out for ourselves, with no concern for other people. Because of this, some people live as if they were living in hell. It's not their fault that they were born in a migrant family rather than as a duke. It's our way of life that makes them the way they are."

Comment

The responses to this primitive show a substantial shift to what the staff has called the sociological conception of poverty (opportunity systems) viz a viz a concept based on individual differences (motivation). Open-ended answers suggest that change may have been greater than scores indicate, but the word, "system," is vague in meaning to some trainees. This, too, is considered change in a favorable direction.

Primitive

All human beings need and use role models with whom they can identify. Minority groups in particular need role models of successful persons with whom they can identify if they are to achieve the necessary motivation to raise themselves to higher socio-economic levels.

Reformulation

10. "The fact is that there are in this county highly successful professionals (e.g., doctors, lawyers, professors), politicians, businessmen, government officials and so on who are minority group members. But awareness of these successful role models can provide little or no help in motivating the typical Negro, Spanish, or other minority group youngsters to work hard to succeed." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	33	16
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	22	12

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	36	18
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	24	10

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. Awareness of such individuals may be a help, especially in the sense that an individual does not have the 'excuse' that he is being held down by society and is then forced to look at his ownself more closely."

After

"Disagree. An awareness of these successful minority people and constantly pointing to them as examples could be a hindrance because it is like saying to someone, "Look what your brother did. Why don't you do the same, you jerk!'"

Before

"Agree. It doesn't seem to be a motivating factor. Perhaps they still feel that this role is unobtainable by them."

After

"Disagree. I think that children aspire to become doctors and teachers, but soon become defeated because in their little 'province' everything is poor and everybody is poor. I think these professionals should act more as models and visit schools and lecture to neighborhood groups."

Before

"Disagree. I disagree on principle because something as abstract as another person's respect in the community or his accumulation of wealth cannot influence you strongly unless you agree that respect, a tie and coat, and a suburban home are worth aiming at."

After

"Agree. We are all concerned with our immediate wants, needs, and pleasures. How can the success story of one professional motivate a drop out who is already experiencing failure and antipathy, and whose only idea of fun is what the evening contains? It takes life-long conditioning to appreciate the advantages of planning for the future and sacrificing for another day."

Before

"Disagree. They could have a very strong influence, but they tend to move into the middle-class stream and, consequently, become far removed both physically and mentally from the situation from which they have come"

After

"Agree. They could help, but the successful move out of the poverty, both mentally and physically, has so far removed them that they must seem very abstract. A successful man who does something for the poor is real and a model. He is a model because he relates to the poor."

Comment

Trainees show little agreement about this primitive. Little evidence of the effect of success models and their effect on the poor was presented. The fact that some persons get out of poverty and then cease to be available as models or leaders and that a punitive attitude is apt to develop in those persons who make it, was introduced in lectures. Open-ended responses indicate that trainees learned these facts.

Primitive

It is not the absence of persons with good ideas which prevents us from dealing effectively with social problems, but bureaucratic systems, which create and foster routinization thereby preventing the application of innovative ideas.

Reformulation

11. "Once a way of handling a problem (such as chronic unemployment in a city) has been established in organizational structures, there is a strong tendency for procedures to become stable and then, in time, become sterile and out of touch with the basic problem. Such 'organization inertia' is more often the basis for the lack of needed change than is the absence of creative reformers, who would sweep away the old in exchange for some new plan." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	46	25
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	14	3

After Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	51	25
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	9	3

Typical Responses

Before
"Agree. Welfare and social workers were once the answer to poverty. Perhaps 'organizational inertia' has taken place and nothing in the structure has changed. What is needed is the addition of something like VISTA as a supplement, but never in exchange for the old."

After
"Disagree. I agree that perhaps organizational inertia does exist, but change requires creative reformers. Inertia sets in not because the organization can't change, but because there are no reformers to initiate change."

Before
"Agree. This is true. Many times organizations see success and feel that the problem is solved. They don't look to see what else needs to be done."

After
"Disagree. When an organization becomes inert, you don't throw it out the window. You add to it. You take those things that have become sterile away from it."

Before
"Disagree. I think the more an organization operates, the more insight it gains into problems. New solutions are tried. This will depend on the personnel."

After
"Agree. It is people that count. If a person in an old agency is dynamic and concerned, the agency will grow and its influence will augment, but it is easy to become sterile with time."

Before

"Disagree. Perhaps the structure is not adaptable enough and too structured to adjust itself to attack-related problems."

After

"Agree. True because they are bogged down by pressure, red tape, caseloads, petty jealousies, an inability to see the whole problem, and professional insecurity."

Comment

Responses of trainees indicate that there was a strong consensus on this primitive prior to the program. The open-ended responses show that additional experience with enthusiastic persons stymied by bureaucracy provided additional support for their view. Several persons persisted in the belief that there was a shortage of persons with innovative ideas and asserted that this was the cause of inertia, demonstrating thereby a lack of understanding of the basic concept.

Primitive

This primitive deals with the notion that there is a shortage of domestic farm labor because Americans do not like to do farm work.

Reformulation

12. "There is such a shortage of persons who are able and willing to work as farm laborers that the importation of Mexican farm labor is probably essential to the well-being of our agricultural economy." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why.

Before Response

	Vista I	Vista II
Agree	12	10
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	48	18

After Response

	Vista I*	Vista II
Agree	1	4
No Answer	0	0
Disagree	59	24

Typical Responses

Before

"Agree. I don't know anything about this, but I should imagine this is true because of the low wages it offers. Thus, the importation of Mexican labor will be needed to keep up our agricultural economy."

After

"Disagree. There isn't a shortage of labor, but a shortage of consideration. Why should a migrant work for such low wages when a welfare check pays more? Even if people have to work for low wages, let them at least get better housing. The labor is here, but the money is not."

---

* Change significant at .01 level   T = 3.353   DF = 71

Before

"Agree. Probably. Indians have been taken down to work, but they go to sleep on the job and no one else will do the work."

After

"Disagree. There is not a shortage of people! They just want decent wages."

Before

"Disagree. I don't think there is a shortage of persons for farm work. They are able to do this type of work, but not willing."

After

"Agree. There is a shortage of farm laborers who are willing to work. The reason for this is because they take whatever wage the farmer pays them."

Comment

Of all the questions, the most significant change occurred in response to Item 12. Throughout the training program a number of farmers and growers discussed their problems with the trainees and, although all admitted that they had wanted braceros, each agreed that there was no shortage of farm labor in the Valley. Thus, as a practical matter trainees received no information from their field experience or from the lectures which would support the belief that there is a shortage of domestic farm labor. The inference that the change in response is a consequence of the six-week training program is made with no doubts.

Schedule D

This instrument consists of four sets of nine belief statements about poverty in the United States. The items in each of the four sets were extracted from essays prepared by Employment Service Personnel during the Colorado School conducted in October, 1964. The instrument was administered for three basic purposes: (1) Staff sought to obtain information regarding existing attitudes and beliefs of trainees about poverty in order to test assumptions made in the development of course content. (2) In evaluating the impact of the course, the item analysis can provide some information regarding the degree to which certain knowledge was received by the trainees. (3) By inspecting variance, standard deviation and mean scores, it is possible to determine whether or not VISTA trainees as a group develop a consensus about various poverty beliefs. The consensus level of the group may be used as an index of the learning experience.

The questionnaire is shown below and the responses of both VISTA training groups appear on the following pages.

Name ______________________________ Schedule D

University of Colorado
The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

In each of the following questions, read through the whole list of alternatives, then decide which statement is closest to (most representative of) your present opinion. Give that statement a rank of 1, then rank the statement next closest to your own opinion 2, and so on, until each statement is ranked from 1 -- most close to your opinion -- through 9. The rank of 9 should correspond to the statement the least close to your own present opinion.

1. In most rural communities in the United States poverty is:
(Rank from 1 through 9)

_____ a. primarily confined to ethnic minority groups.
_____ b. confined to people who lack an achievement orientation.
_____ c. mainly a matter of definition -- hardly any person is really suffering in the United States.
_____ d. a way of life generally acceptable to those who live it.
_____ e. confined to sub-standard slum districts.
_____ f. more a problem in the East than in the West.
_____ g. confined to people receiving welfare aid.
_____ h. a normal condition which will never be completely eliminated.
_____ i. a problem of individual cases rather than a "community problem."

2. In most rural communities in the United States, poverty is mainly due to:
(Rank from 1 through 9)

_____ a. lack of individual ambition to succeed.
_____ b. lack of skills and education.
_____ c. lack of job opportunities.
_____ d. discrimination against minority group members.
_____ e. lack of knowledge of other possible styles of life.
_____ f. the economic structure of the community (e.g., lack of industries which employ unskilled labor).
_____ g. long-term family disorder and circumstances (e.g., husband has deserted the family).
_____ h. lack of resources in a particular area, such as communication and transportation to hear about or get to a job.
_____ i. poor welfare and employment laws which encourage dependency.

3. In most rural communities in the United States, poverty can best be solved by:
(Rank from 1 through 9)

_____ a. developing better education for deprived children in our school system.
_____ b. providing vocational or specialized training for the unemployed.
_____ c. denying welfare support to able-bodied breadwinners.
_____ d. reducing racial prejudice among employers.
_____ e. expanding the job market through new private industry in the community.
_____ f. re-locating people to areas of high demand for workers.
_____ g. exposing youth to successful models from their own group and area.
_____ h. expanding the job market through government projects.
_____ i. re-organizing government agency structures which should handle the problem.

4. In most rural communities in the United States, the most important obstacle to the solution of the problem of poverty is:
(Rank from 1 through 9)

_____ a. community apathy -- e.g., it is not a concern of community leadership.
_____ b. the lack of understanding -- most people do not realize the extent or nature of poverty in the community.
_____ c. the lack of money to support projects designed to reduce poverty.
_____ d. the lack of expert knowledge about how to change established patterns of behavior, especially for particular ethnic groups.
_____ e. resistance to change by those satisfied to stay the way they are now.
_____ f. the continual movement of poorly prepared rural people to cities with no job market.
_____ g. the need of welfare agencies to concentrate efforts on old and disabled persons when real change could come from concentration on youth programs.
_____ h. the expectation that people can succeed regardless of their present circumstances.
_____ i. obsolete or backward government agency structures.

VISTA I

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States poverty is:

	$\bar{X}$ Score
1. primarily confined to ethnic minority groups.	2.85
2. confined to people who lack an achievement orientation.	2.95
3. confined to sub-standard slum districts	4.50
4. a normal condition which will never be completely eliminated.	4.79
5. confined to people receiving welfare aid.	4.95
6. a way of life generally acceptable to those who live it.	5.03
7. a problem of individual cases rather than a community problem.	5.55
8. more a problem in the East than in the West.	6.22
9. mainly a matter of definition -- hardly any person is really suffering from poverty in the U.S.	8.19

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States poverty is:

	$\bar{X}$ Score	Change of rank
1. primarily confined to ethnic minority groups.	1.64	0*
2. confined to sub-standard slum districts.	3.41	+1**
3. confined to people who lack an achievement orientation.	3.43	-1
4. confined to people receiving welfare aid.	4.79	+1
5. a normal condition which will never be completely eliminated.	5.21	-1
6. a problem of individual cases rather than a community problem.	5.88	+1
7. more a problem in the East than in the West.	6.07	+1
8. a way of life generally acceptable to those who live it.	6.26	-2***
9. mainly a matter of definition -- hardly any person is really suffering in the U.S.	8.21	0

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* Significant at .001 level T = 4.000 DF = 89

** Significant at .01 level T = 3.244 DF = 106

*** Significant at .01 level T = 2.721 DF = 115

VISTA II

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States poverty is:

	$\bar{X}$ Score
1. primarily confined to ethnic minority groups.	2.96
2. confined to people who lack an achievement orientation.	3.14
3. confined to sub-standard slum districts.	4.07
4. a way of life generally acceptable to those who live it.	4.50
5. confined to people receiving welfare aid.	4.89
6. a normal condition which will never be completely eliminated.	5.29
7. more a problem in the East than in the West.	5.86
8. a problem of individual cases rather than a community problem.	6.00
9. mainly a matter of definition -- hardly any person is really suffering in the U.S.	8.03

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States poverty is:

	$\bar{X}$ Score	Change of rank
1. primarily confined to ethnic minority groups.	1.71	0*
2. confined to people who lack an achievement orientation.	3.39	0
3. confined to sub-standard slum districts.	3.64	0
4. confined to people receiving welfare aid.	4.50	+1
5. a normal condition which will never be completely eliminated.	5.52	+1
6. a problem of individual cases rather than a community problem.	5.56	+2
7. a way of life generally acceptable to those who live it.	5.96	-3**
8. more a problem in the East than in the West.	6.15	-1
9. mainly a matter of definition -- hardly any person is really suffering in the U.S.	8.41	0

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* Significant at .01 level T = 2.857 DF = 46

** Significant at .05 level T = 2.082 DF = 56

Interpretation

In both VISTA training groups, Item (1), "primarily confined to ethnic minority groups," retains the same rank, but the mean score ($\bar{X}$) changes in a direction which indicates that the trainees as a group reached a higher degree of consensus about this belief. It should be noted that while the belief statement cannot be generalized to the entire nation, it is certainly correct for the southwestern United States and particularly for the area in which the VISTA's received their field training.

It can also be seen that trainees rank the belief that "poverty is a way of life generally acceptable to those who live it" significantly lower following the program. Close and continuing contact with persons living in poverty should dispel assumptions that the poverty stricken are indifferent to their situation and the staff interprets this change to be an effect of the program.

VISTA I

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty is mainly due to:

	$\bar{X}$ Score
1. lack of skills and education	2.05
2. lack of job opportunities	3.22
3. the economic structure of the community (e.g., lack of industries which employ unskilled labor.)	4.22
4. discrimination against minority group members	4.81
5. long-term family disorder and circumstances (e.g., husband has deserted family.)	5.90
6. lack of knowledge of other possible styles of life.	5.91
7. lack of resources in a particular area, such as communication and transportation to hear about or get to a job.	6.02
8. lack of individual ambition to succeed.	6.03
9. poor welfare and employment laws which encourage dependency.	6.83

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty is mainly due to:

	$\bar{X}$ Score	Change of rank
1. lack of skills and education.	2.22	0
2. lack of job opportunities	2.74	0
3. discrimination against minority group members.	3.21	+1*
4. the economic structure of the community (e.g., lack of industries which employ unskilled labor).	4.71	-1
5. lack of resources in a particular area, such as communication and transportation to hear about or get to a job.	5.67	+2
6. long-term family disorder and circumstances (e.g., husband has deserted the family).	6.05	-1
7. poor welfare and employment laws which encourage dependency.	6.45	+2
8. lack of knowledge of other possible styles of life.	6.79	0**
9. lack of individual ambition to succeed.	7.10	-1***

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* Significant at .001 level T = 4.507 DF = 109
** Significant at .05 level T = 2.196 DF = 111
*** Significant at .05 level T = 2.222 DF = 116

VISTA II

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty is mainly due to:

	$\bar{X}$ Score
1. lack of skills and education.	2.68
2. lack of job opportunities.	3.00
3. discrimination against minority group members.	4.11
4. the economic structure of the community (e.g., lack of industries which employ unskilled labor).	4.14
5. lack of knowledge of other possible styles of life.	5.11
6. lack of individual ambition to succeed.	5.93
7. lack of resources in a particular area, such as communications and transportation to hear about or get to a job.	6.11
8. long-term family disorder and circumstances (e.g., husband has deserted the family).	6.82
9. poor welfare and employment laws which encourage dependency.	7.11

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty is mainly due to:

	$\bar{X}$ Score	Change of rank
1. lack of skills and education.	2.29	0
2. lack of job opportunities.	2.71	0
3. the economic structure of the community (e.g., lack of industries which employ unskilled labor).	3.96	+1
4. discrimination against minority group members.	4.04	-1
5. lack of resources in a particular area, such as communications and transportation to hear about or get to a job.	5.79	+2
6. long-term family disorder and circumstances (e.g., husband has deserted the family).	5.86	+2*
7. lack of knowledge of other possible styles of life.	5.96	-2
8. poor welfare and employment laws which encourage dependency	6.57	+1
9. lack of individual ambition to succeed.	7.71	-3**

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* Significant at .05 level T = 2.198 DF = 56
** Significant at .02 level T = 2.575 DF = 51

Interpretation

The most interesting change in the ranking of beliefs about the causes of poverty is Item (9) as it appears on both after tables. The notion that people are poor because they are either stupid or lazy is a widely-believed myth in American society. This notion is so pervasive, that it is frequently believed by members of the helping professions who work with poverty people. The staff interprets this change to be a consequence of emphasis upon opportunity systems in classroom work and direct contact with poverty in field experience.

VISTA I

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty can best be solved by:

		$\bar{X}$ Score
1.	providing vocational or specialized training for the unemployed	1.91
2.	developing better education for deprived children in our school system.	2.21
3.	expanding the job market through new private industry in the community.	4.67
4.	reducing racial prejudice among employers.	4.97
5.	expanding the job market through government projects.	5.02
6.	re-locating people to areas of high demand for workers.	5.95
7.	exposing youth to successful models from their own group and area.	6.16
8.	re-organizing government agency structures which should handle the problem.	6.28
9.	denying welfare support to able-bodied bread winners.	7.93

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty can best be solved by:

		$\bar{X}$ Score	Change of rank
1.	developing better education for deprived children in our school system.	2.07	+1
2.	providing vocational or specialized training for the unemployed.	2.22	-1
3.	expanding the job market through new private industry in the community.	4.26	0
4.	reducing racial prejudice among employers.	4.45	0
5.	expanding the job market through government projects.	4.50	0
6.	re-organizing government agency structures which should handle the problem.	5.60	+2
7.	re-locating people to areas of high demand for workers.	6.55	-1
8.	exposing you to successful models from their own group and area.	6.86	-1
9.	denying welfare support to able-bodied bread winners.	8.48	0*

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* Significant at .02 level T = 2.522 DF = 97

VISTA II

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty can best be solved by:

	$\overline{X}$ Score
1. developing better education for deprived children in our school system.	2.21
2. providing vocational or specialized training for the unemployed	2.36
3. expanding the job market through new private industry in the community.	4.25
4. reducing racial prejudice among employers.	4.50
5. exposing youth to successful models from their own group and area.	5.61
6. expanding the job market through government projects.	5.82
7. re-locating people to areas of high demand for workers.	5.82
8. re-organizing government agency structures which should handle the problem.	6.79
9. denying welfare support to able-bodied bread winners	7.64

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States, poverty can best be solved by:

	$\overline{X}$ Score	Change in rank
1. developing better education for deprived children in our school system.	2.07	0
2. providing vocational or specialized training for the unemployed.	2.18	0
3. expanding the job market through new private industry in the community.	4.46	0
4. reducing racial prejudice among employers.	5.00	0
5. expanding the job market through government projects.	5.18	+1
6. re-organizing government agency structures which should handle the problem.	5.21	+2*
7. exposing youth to successful models from their own group and area.	6.43	-2
8. re-locating people to areas of high demand for workers.	6.64	-1
9. denying welfare support to able-bodied bread winners.	8.11	0

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* Significant at .02 level T = 2.652 DF = 56

Interpretation

The high value which VISTA trainees place on education as a method for solving poverty-related problems is clearly demonstrated by this set of belief statements. The program had no discernible effect on these beliefs. However, direct contact with helping service agencies and lectures on inertia in bureaucracies appears to have had some noticeable effect. In both groups "re-organizing government agency structures which should handle the problem" is ranked higher as a possible solution to poverty problems than on the before response.

3

VISTA I

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States, the most important obstacle to the solution of the problem of poverty is:

		$\bar{X}$ Score
1.	the lack of understanding -- most people do not realize the extent of nature of poverty in the community.	2.33
2.	community apathy -- e.g., it is not a concern of community leadership.	2.57
3.	the lack of expert knowledge about how to change established patterns of behavior, especially for particular ethnic groups.	4.71
4.	resistance to change by those satisfied to stay the way they are now.	5.03
5.	the expectation that people can succeed regardless of their present circumstances.	5.31
6.	the lack of money to support projects designed to reduce poverty.	5.43
7.	the continual movement of poorly-prepared rural people to cities with no job market.	6.00
8.	the need of welfare agencies to concentrate efforts on old and disabled persons when real change could come from concentration on youth programs.	6.52
9.	obsolete or backward government agency structures.	7.10

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 60)

In most rural communities in the United States, the most important obstacle to the solution of the problem of poverty is:

		$\bar{X}$ Score	Change in rank
1.	the lack of understanding -- most people do not realize the extent or nature of poverty in the community.	2.17	0
2.	community apathy -- e.g., it is not a concern of community leadership.	2.60	0
3.	the expectation that people can succeed regardless of their present circumstances.	4.74	+2
4.	the lack of expert knowledge about how to change established patterns of behavior, especially for particular ethnic groups.	5.21	-1
5.	the continual movement of poorly-prepared rural people to cities with no job market.	5.55	+2
6.	obsolete or backward government agency structures.	5.83	+3*
7.	the lack of money to support projects designed to reduce poverty.	5.93	-1
8.	resistance to change by those satisfied to stay the way they are now.	6.62	-4**
9.	the need for welfare agencies to concentrate efforts on old and disabled persons when real change could come from concentration on youth programs.	6.33	-1

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* Significant at .001 level T = 3.651 DF = 109

** Significant at .01 level T = 3.414 DF = 114

VISTA II

Ranking of Opinion Statements Before the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States, the most important obstacle to the solution of the problem of poverty is:

	$\bar{X}$ Score
1. the lack of understanding -- most people do not realize the extent or nature of poverty in the community.	2.29
2. community apathy -- e.g., it is not a concern of community leadership.	2.75
3. the lack of expert knowledge about how to change established patterns of behavior, especially for particular ethnic groups.	4.18
4. the continual movement of poorly-prepared rural people to cities with no job market.	5.18
5. resistance to change by those satisfied to stay the way they are now.	5.21
6. the lack of money to support projects designed to reduce poverty.	5.36
7. the expectation that people can succeed regardless of their present circumstances.	6.43
8. obsolete or backward government agency structures.	6.75
9. the need of welfare agencies to concentrate efforts on old and disabled persons when real change could come from concentration on youth programs.	6.86

Ranking of Opinion Statements After the VISTA Training Program Experience (N = 28)

In most rural communities in the United States, the most important obstacle to the solution of the problem of poverty is:

	$\bar{X}$ Score	Change in rank
1. the lack of understanding -- most people do not realize the extent or the nature of poverty in the community.	1.93	0
2. community apathy -- e.g., it is not a concern of community leadership.	2.50	0
3. the expectation that people can succeed regardless of their present circumstances.	5.14	+4*
4. resistance to change by those satisfied to stay the way they are now.	5.18	+1**
5. obsolete or backward government agency structures.	5.50	+3
6. the lack of expert knowledge about how to change established patterns of behavior, especially for particular ethnic groups.	5.61	-3***
7. the continual movement of poorly prepared rural people to cities with no job market.	6.18	-3
8. the lack of money to support projects designed to reduce poverty.	6.25	-2
9. the need of welfare agencies to concentrate on old and disabled persons when real change could come from concentration on youth programs.	6.71	0

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* Significant at .05 level T = 2.340 DF = 53

** Significant at .05 level T = 2.147 DF = 55

*** Significant at .02 level T = 2.378 DF = 56

Interpretation

It is difficult to establish any meaningful pattern from the trainees' responses about obstacles to the solution of the problems of poverty. There is as much lack of consensus within the two groups as there is between VISTA I and VISTA II. Half of the items on which variance and the standard deviation from the mean increased are located in this category. One possible interpretation of these results is suggested by the staff. It may be that how one defines an obstacle is related to one's own personal knowledge and sense of competence in dealing with problems. Since no standard method for solving problems was presented during the training program, trainees could not have been expected to develop a consensus in this belief area.

Summary and Interpretation - Schedule D

In terms of the purposes for which the instrument was designed, Schedule D was effective. The basic assumptions regarding the attitudes of both groups were reality tested and assured the staff that the basic program content had been correctly designed. As is evident, the majority of the beliefs which might be expected to contribute to the effectiveness of a VISTA volunteer in the field were held by trainees prior to the program. The majority of the changes following training are interpreted by the staff to be in a favorable direction. Finally, of the thirty-six items which were ranked, twenty-eight showed a substantial decreased in variance and deviation from the mean. This indicates that a much higher degree of consensus about the statements existed following the training program than before. Without specifying which aspect of the training led to the increased agreement, the staff believes that the increase in consensus in a favorable direction is a meaningful outcome of the program.

5. Schedule E

1. What do you feel were the main objectives of the Training Project?

The ninety-one trainees who completed Schedule E gave 224 separate answers to this question on the objectives of the training project. In addition to the answer, "to prepare us for ten and a half months of service as a VISTA volunteer," the responses fell into five categories which are listed below:

Objective I. To assist trainees to develop a knowledge of the theoretical aspects of poverty -- the culture of poverty, the Spanish-American in poverty, the invisibility of the poor, and the reasons for middle-class attitudes. (32)

Examples:

1. "Give us an introduction to poverty."
2. "Acquaint us with the various aspects of poverty."
3. "Give us a knowledge of the poverty syndrome and a feeling for its implications."
4. "Acquaint us more fully with the actual problems and situation of the Spanish-American people."
5. "Help us to learn the scope of poverty in rural people -- how poverty effects even minute details of daily life."
6. "Give us information on the total picture of the War on Poverty -- to appreciate what a terrific battle it is."
7. "Acquaint us with the problems, culture, and prejudices connected with the poverty-stricken people."
8. "Give us a complete picture of just what is in the mind of the culturally-deprived American citizen."
9. "Familiarize us with the culture with which we will be working."
10. "Give us a basic orientation on poverty in general and an extensive study of the Spanish-American culture in particular."

Objective II. To provide trainees with experience with poverty as a practical problem -- the ways in which social agencies work with the poor, how the poor actually live and feel, and how the middle class behave toward those in poverty. (31)

Examples:

1. "Teach us the problems of poverty, of changing conditions, and of working in a community with the Anglos and Spanish-Americans."
2. "Place us in the poverty community and in the service agencies so that we see the contrasts in attitudes of both sides."

3. "Give us an awareness of the amount of poverty, of the life these people lead on a day-to-day basis."

4. "Introduce us to areas of major concern in a migrant community, such as public health, home making, sanitation, welfare, recreation, and rural law."

5. "Make us, the middle class, aware of the real poverty situation."

6. "Show us graphically what poverty is and how people live in it."

7. "Help us discover the personality of poverty in terms of actual contact with the poor."

8. "Help us to change preconceived notions of poverty to reality of the situation through direct confrontation with poverty."

9. "Help us realize that we can't eliminate poverty in a short year -- that the process is slow, often unrewarding in our presence."

10. "The 'cultural shock' was successful."

Objective III. Demonstrate the need for, and provide experience in, being adaptable and flexible in working with poverty problems. (27)

Examples:

1. "Prepare us to be able to handle any situation that comes up."

2. "Expose us to the strain, tension, and insecurity with which a volunteer must be accustomed to living."

3. "Teach us not to expect anything, but be ready for everything."

4. "Convince volunteers to be flexible enough to go into communities with rigid power structures and to operate efficiently to get as much done as possible without getting thrown out."

5. "Teach us to be able to handle ourselves in all situations."

6. "Test our frustration level."

7. "Give us flexibility in handling problems and finding solutions."

8. "Train us to adjust to change and to different ways of life."

9. "Teach us to work under pressure and to function effectively without knowing what tomorrow will bring."

10. "They created a situation in the program similar to that which we might find in our assignments -- sudden trips, frustrations, vagueness, the feeling that we don't know what is going to happen and must be prepared to cope with the unknown."

Objective IV. Help the trainees to develop core skills, methods, and techniques for working with the poor -- how to build with native materials, how to work with the power structure, how to recognize medical problems, and how to get people on welfare. (81)

Examples:

1. "Teach us the techniques of disrupting the poverty cycle."
2. "Show us the avenues of help for these people which are both concrete and acceptable to them."
3. "Show us how to communicate with the poor and to be accepted by them."
4. "Give us explanations of the many facilities at our disposal through OEO, welfare, law, etc."
5. "Show us how to leave lasting effects on a community which will far exceed our year's stay."
6. "Teach us how to deal with poverty -- how to dig privies, how to teach people to read and write. . . ."
7. "Train us by actual field involvement and show us how to work with people to accomplish our goals."
8. "Familiarize us with the conditions of poverty and with the organizations related to the poverty community, and to the various techniques of interacting or manipulating them."
9. "Prepare the trainee to be able to meet any problem or situation that might come up by giving him a wide and varied education of poverty."
10. "Our idealism was given direction and we were provided with basic rudimentary skills upon which to build our own individualized approach to problems."

Objective V. Assist the trainees to develop sensitivity to themselves and to the persons they intend to help. (53)

Examples:

1. "Demonstrate to us the art of listening -- the key to understanding."
2. "Cause us to empathize with the poor."
3. "Give us understanding, an awakening, an exposure to the problems of the poor."
4. "Dissolve any stereotypes or myths that we had relating to the poor and minority groups."
5. "Give us insights into the feelings and attitudes of the poor and the Anglos with whom we will be working."

6. "That there is poverty in America -- that something can be done about it by understanding the social and economic structure, by being flexible and adaptable in values, and by knowing the underlying factors to the attitudes existent among the poverty classes."

7. "Show us how to bring about an awareness and understanding on the part of the poor and the rest of the community so they can one day 'walk down that same road.'"

8. "Force us to dig into our own characters and draw on the qualities which will aid us in our jobs."

9. "Serve as a gradual breaking-in process by weaning us from our patterns of middle-class life and by helping us to adjust to living and working under very different conditions."

10. "Deepen our sense of commitment by involving us in poverty, and make us aware of the complexities of the problems that we will face."

One statement quoted in its entirety may effectively summarize all the foregoing responses:

> "We cannot just say that we want to help yet not knowing how. Just to feel for a cause is not enough. We must have tools to work with. We must be flexible to new situations. There is a barrier to break through. Training helped to put a chip in that wall. Now we must continue to hammer away."

2. Were these objectives achieved or not? Please explain.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	60	29
No	0	1
No Response	1	0

Examples:

"I have never learned so much in such a short period of time."

"I never realized how bad things really were for these people and the farmer. . . . I never realized how much you could learn to see by one visit."

"I believe I have learned much from this program, although many words were wasted in some lectures -- caught up with terms and sociological games."

"I feel we are all better equipped to handle these areas (of poverty) than before we came. . . . The lectures on the whole were excellent. . . . the field placements, informal acquaintances, and basic instructors were good."

"Actual personal experiences rang true to me and gave me the largest part of what I will draw on next year -- lectures telling how a voting drive was organized and how the poor have been helped in Denver."

"Any program would have achieved its objectives, I think, if it gave us an idea of the enormity of the problem, the overlapping areas of assistance, and still left us enthusiastic to get started. This has been done."

"I've never seen such a phenomenal presentation of so much thought material in such a short time -- almost too phenomenal."

"I thought of poverty in abstract terms and spoke of it in psychological phrases; but I have worked in it now, talked with people in it, and it is real, approachable, and workable."

"As far as being flexible, this was brought in very well, but somehow the program itself seemed to be lacking something. . . . I can't quite sense what."

"Through basic instructors and meeting people, I learned struggles; through lectures by people who have done something, I learned a way of helping."

"The training was an excellent background of information and of actual work (field work). Training is important, but the real important things are yet to come."

"I feel almost fully prepared to go to my assignment. However, I am sure I will run into things not found in the training program, but that is to be expected. Otherwise training would be ten months and service six weeks."

"I believe these objectives were achieved because as I was answering the questions the second time I found myself with an entirely new concept of poverty."

"For me, yes. . . . I certainly do not know all the answers, but I now have confidence that I can get help in answering many problems and questions through the use of resources available around me."

"I feel that I understand something about the people we'll be working with. . . . and I understand the problems of poverty better than before."

"For me they were simply because I feel that my motivation for altruism was wanting to be manifested for some time. . . . as a whole, the music that was played was beautiful to my ears."

"I thought the VISTA training program was great considering the problems which arose as a result of this being the first program for the University of Colorado. The program was chaotic, but this was good too."

"Basically, yes."

"We had a chance to work directly with and come in contact with the people when building the house, and also in the field placements."

"When we weren't told the far-sighted plan of events, we became aware of the fact that it would be like this later."

"The program exposed us to a variety of situations very well."

"In some cases, yes. There should have been more stress and information given on governmental agencies that could help in certain situations."

"These objectives were achieved by giving me the opportunity to visit with those I am preparing to help."

"I feel they were, for the most part, achieved, although at times there seemed to be a lot of things that weren't too important."

"The main objectives achieved were stimulating ideas and giving information as to available resources."

"I never learned so much in my life."

"I feel that the staff accomplished their tasks. . . . field experiences were the most helpful in providing the practical and gut-level problem-solving approach which I see as necessary."

"I think we all got some idea of the 'whys' of poverty -- the conditions that discourage advancement, the failures and disappointments. Talking with the poor individually was very helpful."

"Overall the objectives were achieved, but I think more emphasis could have been placed on how we can achieve lasting effects on the community."

"We were told 'There are migrant camps here -- find them' . . . . we worked in Lariat and visited migrant camps. We saw how they lived. We looked into the privies and we learned about poverty."

"There is really no telling about achievement until each of us is out of the training situation and alone on the field. I do feel, however, that we will be able to face the individual situation with much more confidence and understanding than we could have before training."

"I feel that this program has been more than adequate in achieving the objectives. The basic interviews, the lectures on power structures and administration, and the welfare and sanitation placements were the most useful in relation to our objectives."

"I certainly feel that I know more about poverty now than I did six weeks ago. . . . I feel that I have enough ideas on what to do to at least start to attempt to effect changes. I feel so motivated that I'm getting very anxious to start to work."

"I only hope I have retained all I want to retain. The education we received I know will help us to do our job better no matter what we are called upon to perform."

"All plans succeeded to implement the objectives. The food, lectures, discussions, placements, demonstrations, and movies served the desired achievement."

"On the whole I feel the program achieved its ends. We were given a broad range of ideas and concepts as well as some practical experience with some of the different aspects of rural poverty."

"Through lectures and placements we learned about the availability of opportunity; by knowing some of the Spanish-Americans we found out that they aren't a group, but individuals."

"I think they were because I feel that my own outlook has changed greatly. I think that I understand these people much better now. Homemaking and surveys were especially good for us, since we could see the living conditions."

"The many lecturers helped us in an academic and theoretical way, whereas our field experience in the valley was of a more practical nature."

"I didn't know and now I'm sure I do -- I know I can be effective to some degree."

"I feel I have developed an overall picture of problems and situations that might evolve."

"Our sensitivity and awareness was fully developed in our field placements. Our role of change agent was hit upon time and time again in the lectures. . . . The most remarkable thing about this program is that after training we could work in any part of the country."

"The placements achieved this purpose. The books, materials, and lectures provided the information a focus. Experts and examples demonstrated the techniques."

"I have never learned so enjoyably. I believe I have a great overall view of how a community works and how I can help change the community."

"Because we really did learn the problems of the poor. We saw how they live, the way they think and feel. We learned not to take everything at face value -- to look deeper into the situations."

"We were exposed to the problems of poverty both intellectually and physically and one approach complemented the other."

"I have learned who can be helpful and how they might be approached. I have learned how to listen to what is being said."

"The program has given me concepts and ideas from which I can work and, more importantly, a sense that something should and can be done."

"I feel we all have a better understanding of poverty. We have learned well that as change agents we are there to aid the entire community."

"I think the success of the VISTA volunteers will affirm this. The amount we accomplish in the field in one or two years will be testimonial for the training period."

"I believe that I have a different view of the poor. I am able to look at the problems of the poor from many angles -- to realize that they have more than one problem."

"Quite effectively -- I have learned more in the past six weeks than I thought was possible."

"We all got a good idea -- or maybe just a spark -- of the way to put the objectives of this program into actual use."

"I think the training program was excellent with just the right balance between actual field experience and the necessary lectures and discussions on methods and techniques."

"Yes, these objectives were achieved because we saw how people live -- especially the children, who don't have anyplace to go or play."

The single negative response was:

"The person who bucked the system or doubted the value of certain techniques on sound psychological ground was put in the same category as the habitual 'bitcher and moaner.'"

3. Do you feel that your own commitment to work in VISTA has increased, decreased, or remained unchanged? Please explain.

	Vista I	Vista II
Increased	47	28
Decreased	1	0
No change	12	2
No response	1	

Examples:

"I came with a general feeling. Being exposed to actual poverty, talking with the people, learning what I can do has increased the general feeling."

"I wasn't committed to much of anything when I came except doing something to help people. I think I am now deeply committed to VISTA's objectives and to the War on Poverty."

"These people have to struggle all day just to stay alive. If I can do something to ease this struggle just a little, I would feel the effort was worthwhile."

"It has increased because it is much more immediate and concrete now."

"It increased as I realized the need was greater than I ever imagined."

"When I began in VISTA it was a lark. I couldn't see myself doing anything more strenuous than tutoring remedial English or washing filthy floors. Now, it's apparent that this year will be wholly given over to interference in every aspect of my neighbors' lives."

"My commitment has not so much changed as it is better defined. It has been expanded so I have a more conceivable picture of just how I might help people to help themselves."

"I feel I have skills now that will enable me to change poverty, if only a little. Before I had the heart but no hands, now I feel I have both."

"If you could measure motivation objectively, you would find that although I thought it was impossible, my motivation has increased tenfold."

"It is like making a bull mad before a fight. I am now ready to go out and work twice as hard as I would have before training."

"I believe my own commitment has increased tremendously because I have been educated to the fact that there are many poor people and they have many problems."

"It has increased -- definitely. I just can't believe how these people live. I have to do something. I just have to."

"I just didn't realize how much I could do, or how much that there is to be done."

"I'll never be quite the same. It has been a great eye-opener to realize there are so many people in this beautiful country of ours that have never had equal opportunities."

"The work with the children especially made me want to do more to see if they can't have a little better chance than their older brothers and sisters."

"After seeing all that is to be done, one's commitment can only be strengthened."

"The more I learned and the more I became involved, the more my commitment to the poor increased."

"If anything, my commitment has increased because I now believe I am beginning to understand what poverty is really like."

"I feel my commitment has increased because I've been shown that serious and intelligent people really care -- and their care is in a constructive form."

"My liberal friends in college told me that VISTA, being a government agency, was too much a part of the system to be able to effect changes in it. But it seems to me now that I can do what I want to do through VISTA."

"The warmth of people in Lariat, and their great need, has increased my commitment. The more I learned about poverty, the more I saw the need for someone to help."

"Group attitude has been a tremendous re-enforcement to a commitment to work in VISTA. . . . also a constant remainder of the tragedy of poverty for six whole weeks takes its toll."

"My commitment to VISTA is much higher and more realistic than it was when I filled out the application form. I must admit that I did harbor some rather romantic notions about what this year would be like. These have been dispelled. I am ready to work."

"It has increased because I understand better how to go about accomplishing my objectives."

"My commitment was very vague and general. Now it is named and aimed."

"Now that I have gotten a deeper understanding of these people, I feel a duty to help them, because with what I have learned in the last six weeks I think I can help them."

"Everyday brought a new awareness of another dimension of human suffering, expanded my commitment, and increased my means to do something about these things."

"Definitely -- two months ago VISTA was actually just a task. Now, I want to help. I can't stand to see things the way that they are."

"The program was more than I had expected and this enthusiasm coupled with awareness of the need for a VISTA has increased my commitment."

"I feel as though all the people involved in the training were dedicated. This dedication caused me to feel great commitment."

"I had a commitment before -- now I know why, how, what to do with my commitment."

"Before it was a feeling of reaching out in the air to do something. Now there is something to extend that reach."

"When I came into VISTA I was not really sure I could offer a lot, but now I know that I can give these people a lot because they have very little. I am bursting with things to do."

"Active participation in an environment of poverty has been an awakening experience. My initial doubts about my lack of skill are fading as I realize anyone of my background and education can be of help to less fortunate, uninformed, somewhat ignorant people if I have the desire and acquire the techniques for communication, observation, and understanding."

"I feel a need to help much more now than I did before. The training is responsible for this."

"My eyes have seen people wanting to change but lacking the know-how to bring about it's occurrence. I am anxious and eager to get going in assisting these people to assist themselves."

"I'm not the same idealist as I was upon entering. . . . I'll accomplish as much as I am willing to work for."

"The poor are now real people with real problems -- before they were off in the distance."

"Enthusiasm grew in the training as our knowledge became more specific and certain."

"Now I have a tangible, real program in which to unleash my desires, and I have real people whose problems are not imaginary but stand sharply before my eyes. My commitment is no longer an idealistic vision, but is attached to something real and meaningful."

Fourteen persons reported no change in their level of motivation and one person reported a decrease. The responses of these persons indicate that their motivation was so high when they entered the program that there was very little room for increase.

"Knowledge has increased, but not basic commitment. VISTA's objectives have been a part of my outlook before VISTA came into existence."

"I realize just how much I am needed, but I feel as committed as before."

"I came in to establish a relationship between the way a people live and my way of life. The training just hinted on how the most effective, tactful procedure can be used."

"Commitment hasn't really changed in degree, but it has taken shape. I now know what I'm to be committed to."

"I was committed in my own mind when I came in, and I remain so."

"Some modification in regard to particulars has changed, but not my basic commitment to the VISTA ideals."

"My commitment to work in VISTA may have increased some. I am still very sure I want to work with this program."

"The change has been in my understanding of what the commitment will involve, and this has many more changes to undergo, I am sure."

"I don't think it has changed, because when I entered I felt a strong commitment which was only supported by the training program."

"I still want to go, go, go."

"Sometimes I'm very idealistic about the program and what it can accomplish. Other times I feel inadequate and doubtful."

"My commitment remains unchanged, but I was made more aware of the problems."

"Only time will tell. An understanding of poverty and possible methods of attacking the problems is a start. If God is left out of VISTA and the War on Poverty, in general, it will not succeed."

"There is no change because I have always had a strong feeling of helping other people. It will take a lot for these feelings that I have to decrease."

"Now I'm shot full of realism and my idealized VISTA has been nicely removed from it's podium. My commitment is now less because the training program made me realize how small a job I can actually do. But I still am deeply enough committed so that I'll do my damndest at any job VISTA or anyone else throws at me providing it can help alleviate poverty."

4. I liked the food.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	44	29
No	17	0
No response	0	1

5. The announcements and directions were clear and easy to follow.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	53	23
No	8	6
No response	0	1

6. There should have been more time for recreation.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	29	16
No	32	11
No response	0	3

7. When you first came to the Vista Training Project, did you have well-formulated learning objectives? If yes, state them here:

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	11	4
No	49	25
No response	1	1

to learn about Spanish-Americans and the reasons for poverty (2)
to learn as much as possible (2)
to stimulate commitment
to learn about public health and the Spanish-Americans
to learn what poverty is and who the poor are (2)
to learn about the laws concerning the poor
to learn how to organize farm labor
to learn specifics
to see if I should go in to social work
to learn to work within for change; to learn techniques of leadership
to learn how to handle agencies and the power structure
to expand knowledge of poverty and people

8. I could have participated more actively.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	39	26
No	22	3
No response	0	1

9. I would like to have had more time spent in:

field work (56)
free time to read and study (16)
discussion (8)
movies on poverty
adult education
how to council
the mountains
literary education
solitude
learning practical skills, such as first aid (2)
sleeping
individual projects (2)

10. In the total picture, I think nearly everyone accepted everyone else and made them feel comfortable.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	57	20
No	4	9
No response	0	1

11. There was too much time pressure.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	21	12
No	40	17
No response	0	1

12. Most people in the group changed their attitudes and behavior and became more knowledgeable during the training program.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	45	24
No	15	3
No response	1	3

13. I learned many things which will be helpful in my work relationships with the disadvantaged.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	57	29
No	4	0
No response	0	1

14. My most significant learning occurred during, or as a result of:

a. lecture sessions (27)
b. sessions with supervisors (25)
c. informal discussions with other participants (16)
d. field placements (75)
e. demonstrations with basic instructors (16)
f. other:
    reading
    applying suggestions of the lecturers
    conglomeration of all

15. Discussion with other participants outside the formal groups was beneficial to me.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	55	26
No	6	3
No response	0	1

16. There should have been more planned recreation.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	13	13
No	48	15
No response	0	2

17. The project faculty was well chosen for the job. Any comment:

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	56	28
No	5	1
No response	0	1

Examples of comments:

especially the dedication of the staff
excellent staff
hardworking and helpful staff
especially the supervisors
couldn't have been better
very friendly, approachable staff
good knowledgeable staff
well qualified
really great -- my thanks to each

supervisors judged trainees as mental misfits
no concern for the volunteers
one or two were immature
some were; some weren't

18. Too much time was spent in:

lectures (51)
wasting time between events (2)
dilly-dallying
the history of the valley
hammering
drinking (3)
eating
my own recreation
waiting for late trainees to begin project (3)
elbowroom (6)
structured situations
indoors
unrelated questions in class (2)
arguing
tests
public health survey

19. The pressure of time was conducive to the learning situation.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	36	21
No	22	7
No response	3	2

20. People improved their awareness of the problems of persons in poverty.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	61	29
No	0	0
No response	0	1

21. There was enough time to discuss with others outside of formal groups.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	44	19
No	17	10
No response	0	1

22. I think I gained knowledge but without much change in my attitude or behavior.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	33	9
No	28	21
No response	0	0

23. Most of my learning resulted from:

lectures (11)
discussions (29)
placements (41)
exposure to poverty (19)
basic instructors (4)
earlier knowledge
listening
reading materials
self involvement

24. Inadequate use was made of:

group meetings (6)
lectures (10)
placements (9)
time (7)
relationship between staff and trainees (3)
supervisor sessions (3)
trainee's ideas (2)
basic instructors
specific faculty and staff members (7)
staff's knowledge
Monte Vista Anglo attitude (5)
working with the poor (4)
role playing (3)
selection of supervisors
the basketball

25. The training project started a change in my attitude toward others.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	35	27
No	25	3
No response	1	0

26. If I were to plan another such training program, I would give more time to the:

a. lecture sessions (5)
b. sessions with supervisors (26)
c. informal discussion (34)
d. field placements (57)
e. demonstrations with basic instructors (25)
f. other:
    the people we're supposed to help
    free time (6)
    townspeople
    individual projects (2)
    going out on own (2)
    remedial teaching
    role playing
    reading
    recreation

27. Were the physical facilities satisfactory?

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	51	30
No	10	0
No response	0	0

28. I participated in all activites as well as I could have.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	36	13
No	25	17
No response	0	0

29. I felt more "take home" material (books, reprints, etc.) could have been provided.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	28	14
No	33	16
No response	0	0

30. The various parts of the training program seemed related to each other.

	Vista I	Vista II
Yes	58	30
No	4	0
No response	0	0

31. To improve future training programs, I would suggest:

more time to get to know the people of the area
shorter lectures
avoid boring, repetitive lectures
more beneficial supervisor meetings
presentation of philosophical and background material first
more free time
more supervisor meetings
fewer lectures
better organization of field placements
supervisors should keep confidences
more field placements
actual living experiences with the poor
more "roughing it"
eight hours sleep a night
lectures end by 9:00pm absolutely
more personal interaction with staff
no house building
more recounting of personal experiences by speakers
more techniques of how to work in the field
a choice of placements
more exposure to Anglo side of the poverty issue
time to work in areas of interest (taking a child fishing, etc.)
counseling of the young volunteers
more role playing
more of "nitty-gritty" type lectures
a better diet
screen lecturers for their speaking ability
quitting when the lecturer is through speaking -- don't wait til 5:00pm
more pre school placements
less parties and less drinking
a shorter training time
better planned lectures
problems involving personal research
periodic opportunity for self-inventory and attitude check
that each volunteer live with an impoverished family for a week before training to relate to reality of poverty better
the usage of ambiguity -- it is helpful to teaching adaptability and flexibility
more information on Spanish-American culture
shorter question-answer periods
smaller groups in placements
all trainees reside at one place -- those at motels were at a big disadvantage
more specialized field training, i.e., first aid, etc.
that we be given more knowledge of the program
not spoon-feeding the volunteers
not putting trainees through a sociologist's laboratory
starting lectures, meals, etc. on time
shorter testing periods

more people who have succeeded and can share their impressions and experiences
more interviews with Anglos to demonstrate kinds of "rationalizations" we will be up against
more basic rules at the beginning and less double talk
a day working in the fields
some early control on the rumor system
living in a migrant camp for a period of time
more literature on the MDTA
have trainees live on own for a day or two -- in San Luis or on Larimer street
talks by actual VISTA volunteers
more movies
build another house -- this united the group more than anything
exposure of trainees to different philosophies of social action
more trust and confidence between staff and trainees
a survey on adult education
more explicit information on clothing to bring to training program
better lighting in the classroom and hotel rooms
not so much pressure the last week
more effort by the staff to draw out trainees
that trainees be grouped by similar backgrounds and interests
more basic instructors
more communication with affluent world
mimeographing the good lectures
treating trainees as adults, not children
assessment of trainee's capabilities and ideas
knocking off air of secrecy
paying more attention to stated preferences
giving a lecture to the trainees about behavior and conduct
encouraging initiative
working on elbowroom in smaller groups
more briefing before placements
less emphasis on deselection

Schedule F

One of the questions which staff members had was: "To what extent will coninuous contact with poverty persons and their environment cause VISTA trainees to revise their own estimates of the importance of various non-material or relational elements and material objects which appear with different frequencies in poverty families?"

A simple instrument was prepared which listed such items as "respect for law and order," "religious instruction," "recreation as a family group" (non-material or relational) and other items such as "television set" and "late model car" (material objects).

Trainees were asked to rank all items according to "how important you think it is for a family to have (each of these items)." Twenty-one items were presented. Seven were considered to be of a non-material or relational character and fourteen were thought to be material. The ratings were made during the second and sixth weeks of the second VISTA training program. The results of the ranking appear below:

TABLE (7)
Material - Non-material Ranking Scale*

Questionnaire Item	Before		After		Change in rank
	Rank	$\bar{X}$ Score	Rank	$\bar{X}$ Score	
Display of love for children	1	2.433	2	2.767	-1
Close ties between family members	2	2.767	1	1.433	+1
Respect for law and order	3	5.267	3	5.567	0
Recreation as a family group	4	5.367	4	5.567	0
Running water	5	6.267	5	5.800	0
Inside toilet	6	7.133	6	7.033	0
Religious instruction	7	7.733	7	8.467	0
Bath tub or shower	8	8.200	8	8.633	0
Kitchen sink	9	9.067	9	9.633	0
Central heating	10	9.367	11	10.667	-1
Refrigerator	11	9.867	10	10.500	+1
Washing machine	12	10.767	12	10.767	0
Electric stove	13	13.267	13	12.400	0
Radio	14	14.533	14	14.167	0
Sewing machine	15	14.533	15	14.600	0
Religious statues, crucifixes	16	15.733	20	17.300	-4
Family photographs	17	15.967	17	16.033	0
Television set	18	16.867	16	15.033	+2
Phonograph	19	17.767	19	17.300	0
Late model car	20	18.000	18	17.267	+2
Hi fi set	21	19.600	21	18.700	0

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* N = 30.

Schedule G

Another question to which the training staff sought an answer was: "Will the reasons trainees give for joining VISTA change during the training program?" Each trainee was asked to give a statement about his reason for wanting to join VISTA on his initial application to Washington, D. C. The application was filed in his permanent record. Some seventeen different reasons were given by VISTA trainees in their original applications. An eighteen-item questionnaire was prepared and given to the trainees of VISTA II during the second and sixth weeks. The trainee's responses are shown below:

Before

Motivational Instrument*

1. Gain insight into my self and others.	87%
2. Help persons less fortunate than I.	83%
3. Help me develop skills in dealing with people.	83%
4. Learn things which will enable me to contribute to my community.	83%
5. Get a chance to express ideals I had been thinking and reading about.	70%
6. To take part in a new social experiment.	67%
7. Find solutions to contemporary problems.	60%
8. Learn what others think about social problems and poverty.	57%
9. Meet people who are quite different from me.	47%
10. Continue my education.	40%
11. Become more sure of myself.	40%
12. Improve my intellectual skills.	40%
13. Make new friends.	40%
14. Take a year off to think things over.	23%
15. Escape the narrowness of my community.	23%
16. Talk with people who have more intellectual skills and interests than my usual "social friends."	20%
17. Supplement an unduly narrow or technical college education.	17%
18. Substitution of VISTA for military service.	10%

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* N = 30. Trainees could check as many items as they felt applied.

Schedule G

Motivational Instrument*

After

		Change in Rank
1. Help persons less fortunate than I.	90%	+1
2. Gain insight into myself and others	87%	-1
3. Get a chance to express ideas I had been thinking and reading about.	83%	+2
4. Learn things which will enable me to contribute to my community.	77%	+0
5. Help me to develop skills in dealing with people.	77%	-2
6. To take part in a new social experiment.	77%	0
7. Find solutions to contemporary problems.	73%	0
8. Learn what others think about social problems and poverty.	70%	0
9. Continue my education.	70%	+1
10. Become more sure of myself.	63%	+1
11. Improve my intellectual skills.	60%	+1
12. Meet people who are quite different from me.	57%	-3
13. Take a year off to think things over.	37%	+1
14. Make new friends.	33%	-1
15. Escape the narrowness of my community.	30%	0
16. Supplement an unduly narrow or technical college training.	27%	+1
17. Talk with people who have more intellectual skills and interests than my usual "social friends."	13%	-1
18. Substitution of VISTA for military service.	10%	0

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* N = 30. Trainees could check as many items as they felt applied.

(Schedule H was designed to accompany a taped conversation between a VISTA volunteer and a person from the poverty community who was seeking assistance. For time and technical reasons this instrument was not administered.)

Name ______________________________ Schedule H

The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

1. Please list what you consider to be the important points in John's story.

2. How would you describe the problem that John believes he has?

3. Make a list of questions that you will have to have answers to before you can take any action.

4. List the possible resources that you might be able to use to help John based on the information you already have.

Schedule I

Descriptions of federal, state and county programs in the social welfare field frequently make use of alphabetic shorthand to describe organizational names. OEO's VISTA program is no exception. Faculty lecturers, many of whom worked with or in government programs, also used initials in their presentations to student. Lecturers were regularly stopped in their lectures by trainees' questions about specific alphabetic designations. A questionnaire composed of some -- but by no means all -- of the initials used during the program was designed to see if any objective measure of learning could be established. The results appear below. If the reader wishes to test his own knowledge, the answers appear in the appendix.

War on Poverty Alphabet Test

Agency or Program	Percent Correct Before	Percent Correct After
1. ADC	93%	100%
2. OEO	89%	100%
3. Voc. Rehab.	85%	100%
4. Job Corps	96%	96%
5. VA	93%	89%
6. CCC	39%	89%
7. MDTA	32%	89%
8. CAP	7%	89%
9. OAP	39%	85%
10. DVS	4%	85%
11. YOC	11%	82%
12. NYC	18%	82%
13. Title 6	4%	75%
14. NRA	36%	64%
15. Title 3B	4%	50%
16. AFDC	7%	43%
17. AND	43%	29%
18. USES	11%	29%
19. OMAT	4%	11%

Interpretation

Obviously, the trainees learned some of the War on Poverty jargon which is so widely used today. The test is probably not a particularly good index of their knowledge, however. Many of these initials can be easily identified in context, but not standing alone. For instance, in a discussion of categorical programs of the welfare department, AND, OAP, ADC, or AFDC have easily determined meanings that are apt to be forgotten on a test of this nature.

Schedule J

One of the most difficult aspects of training VISTA volunteers is projecting in a meaningful way the kinds of problems they are actually going to face in their permanent assignments. Somehow, college-trained people appear to discount, or take with a grain of salt, much of the information that is presented in a classroom situation. Even practical field training problems can be partially discounted because the training setting is not the same as the setting in which the trainee will ultimately be placed. These facts, combined with our recognition of the somewhat exalted notions that VISTA trainees had about the amount of power and authority they were going to be able to command in their permanent settings caused the staff to develop Schedule J.

By the second week of the VISTA II training program, we had received information about the different kinds of problems the first training group were encountering. We analyzed letters from volunteers already in the field for problems and, after adding several problems that members of the staff felt were possible even though they had not yet been reported, prepared a ten-item questionnaire. Trainees were told that each of the problems described on the questionnaire were true problems that VISTA volunteers or Peace Corpsmen had actually faced.

The training staff hypothesized that after the month's training in Monte Vista and Denver trainees' responses would differ in the following ways: (1) Trainees would mention more specific resources by name. This would be an index of acquired factual knowledge. (2) Trainees would make use of more indirect approaches for more problems than on the before questionnaire. (3) Trainees would demonstrate their recognition of the need for patiently establishing themselves in the community and working with, rather than against, the existing community power structure.

Several responses to each of the ten questions appear below:

1. You are a volunteer who has recently arrived at Amora Placita. On one of your visits to meet families living in the community you meet a small child who has a draining ear. The mother says she doesn't know what to do about it because she has no money to pay a doctor. What will you do?

Before Response
Call the nearest public hospital.
Arrange for transportation.
See about getting assistance for the expenses.
After Response
Contact the closest public clinic or hospital.
Find a public health nurse.
Call the nearest welfare agency for assistance from the General Assistance Fund.

Before Response
Get medical attention so that deafness does not result.
Check with the welfare agency to see if they can help.

After Response

Approach the public health nurse and ask for advice or check with the welfare department.

If no satisfaction from above, go to a local doctor and see if he will treat the child with the idea of being paid later.

Approach local service groups for assistance.

Before Response

Alleviate the draining ear.

Contact the welfare department to see if any services are available. Explain the acuteness of the situation to the department, make arrangements, and inform the mother as to what is being done.

After Response

Contact a doctor to see if he were willing to give his services in lieu of later payment.

If not, see what other clinical facilities are available.

Talk with the welfare department to see what help they could offer.

2. In a discussion with a local lumber yard owner, you discover that he is willing to donate some lumber if the people living in Amora Placita want to build a privy to replace a ramshackle outhouse at the local school. What will you do?

Before Response

Talk with the school personnel to see if they want a new privy.

Talk with some of the people to see if they will help.

Set a time to have the lumber delivered when the people are free to help.

After Response

Go to the most important leader in Amora Placita and talk to him.

Have him suggest people to help to construct the privy.

Before Response

Get permission of the school officials to construct the privy.

Get the parents of the school children to help build it.

After Response

Kick down the old outhouse and let the word out that the school has none, but that a local businessman is willing to provide the lumber for a new one if volunteers will construct it.

Before Response

Ask the people if they would be willing to construct a new outhouse.

Get plans from the sanitarian for the privy.

After Response

Make the people aware of the fact that a new privy is needed and that free materials are available by dropping subtle suggestions.

3. Three different families report that the local welfare caseworker doesn't like them and has deliberately prevented them from getting the full allowance of welfare funds to which they are entitled? What will you do?

Before Response

If the caseworker can't be reasoned with, go over his head.

Watch my step, however, so as not to get in bad with the commissioners.

After Response

Find out the caseworker's point of view.

Talk with the director.

If he isn't cooperative, talk to those who have influence with him and get them to take action.

Before Response

Discuss the situation with them.

See the welfare office.

After Response

Probe them for full details and facts.

Then talk with the welfare department.

If they don't respond, go to a higher official; go as high as possible until results are gotten.

Before Response

Contact the caseworker for her story.

Try to get the two parties together.

After Response

Contact the local welfare department heads.

If necessary, contact outside assistance for cooperation and pressure.

4. The Amora Placita movie theater segregates the seating of Anglos from Spanish-Americans and Negroes. Individual Negroes and Spanish Americans tell you that they are angry about this situation. What will you do?

Before Response

Try to get the manager to change the rules so that people can sit wherever they wish.

After Response

Get people with influence, such as ministers, to talk to him.

Try every method possible to change his attitude.

Try subtly to twist what he says to look as though he is the prime mover in causing the change.

Before Response

Cannot say that any plan or act of my own would be very valuable.

After Response

Get the facts from both sides.

If the theater owner's reasons are preposterous, go to the public officials.

Get organizations that handle such cases to take the case.

Before Response

Talk with the manager to see if his objections can be overcome. The owner could be made to realize how much more money he would make if the theater wasn't segregated; that people will accept the new arrangement.

After Response

Rather than picketing, start to change attitudes in the community.
Go slow.
Be anonymous in the instigation of the change; let the community execute the change.

5. Your sponsor in Amora Placita is surprized at the fact that you have arrived a full two months before he had expected you. He says that he's glad you're here, but he won't have anything for you to do until the migrants arrive -- which is a month from now. What will you do?

Before Response

Spend the time just talking with people and getting acquainted.
Take notice of problem areas in the community where I could be of assistance.

After Response

Effectively utilize the time by observing the daily activities of the community; by talking with the local people and public officials; by getting to know the power structure; by demonstrating my interest and concern; and by starting to work with the existing problems that I find.

Before Response

Inspect the houses and the safety conditions in them.
Clean out privies and move them if necessary.
Ask for help from the people who run the camp.

After Response

Establish relationships with the power structure.
Orientate myself with the agencies governing the activities of the migrants.
Try to gain an insight into the existing problems of the migrant camps and then see what can be done to solve them.

Before Response

Go out and find something to do because undoubtedly there will be something to do -- e.g., construct a new privy; take a water sample; do general repair work; talk to local officials and learn as much as possible about the area and local agencies.

After Response

Familiarize myself with the community.
See what facilities are available.
Learn the history of the area.
Get to know the big wigs so you will know where to find them when needed.
If facilities for migrants are not satisfactory, begin working on ideas which may bring solutions.

6. On a home visit you meet Mrs. Ramone who has had seven children in the past six years. She says that she and her husband wish that they didn't have to have more children. She asks you, "Can you help me with this problem?" What will you do?

Before Response

Give her a solution consonant with her conscience.

If conscience permits, contact Planned Parenthood for information.

After Response

Find a solution consistent with her desires and conscience.

Talk to local welfare department, doctor, and Planned Parenthood to find out what help is available.

Before Response

Inform her of birth control methods.

Have her talk to her religious director or doctor.

Contact these people also and try to arrive at a satisfactory solution.

After Response

Find out about the availability of Planned Parenthood clinics and local doctors who support them.

If her religious beliefs permit it, arrange for her to see the necessary doctor.

Before Response

I know little about family planning. Should I check with a center or a doctor?

After Response

Discuss birth control with her and her husband.

Send her to her priest or minister. (Try to override his opinion if it is negative. There are many beautiful ways to do this -- e.g., who wants to be a religious martyr when they are already doing their christian duty by raising what they already have.)

Check with a doctor or the welfare department.

Write to the family planning association for materials.

7. The delinquency problem (teenage drinking, vandalism, etc.) has increasingly become a serious problem in Amora Placita. The police chief has suggested that stronger law enforcement is the only answer, and most of the middle-class people agree with him. The kids tell you that there isn't anything to do that is fun. What will you do?

Before Response

Interest the teenage population in sports, cooking classes, and dances.

After Response

Get a Community Action Program started for the teenagers.

Talk to clubs and organizations concerning the problem; ask them for their suggestions of ways to eliminate this problem.

Organize athletic competitions.

Before Response

Try to get the teenagers interested in planning activities.

Find a location to hold dances.

After Response

Try to get a youth center built for the teenagers -- meet with the kids to find out what they want; meet with influentials who could provide funds or materials and point out importance of such a project; have the kids build their own place.

Before Response

Discuss the situation with the teenagers, parents, and police.
Get the kids together to see what it is they want; organize them.
Do individual counseling.

After Response

Verbally agree with the police chief; however, set out to show him that if the teenagers had a place to go and things to do, there would be less trouble.
Try to get a church group to back the kids and help them to get a place for recreation.
Crack down on underage purchase of liquor.

8. In Amora Placita you find that there are nearly fifty children from poverty-stricken families who are between the ages of three and five. There is no preschool program, but the principal of the local school says that he thinks such a program would be a good idea. He has no funds for the program, but his church is willing to make a basement room used for Sunday school classes available on weekdays. What will you do?

Before Response

Get mothers in the community involved by organizing a program.
Get them to donate useful items.
Try to find a competent teacher who will donate her time.

After Response

Contact CAP. They have funds for such a program.
Enlist the services of people who are willing to donate their time.

Before Response

Set up a Head Start project if possible; if not, organize something and let the principal handle it.
Contact proper people to see what can be done.
Let the community know what is going on.

After Response

Get principal and church leader to organize a group to submit a proposal to OEO; help draw up proposal.
Get to work.

Before Response

Talk to the mothers and get their interest.
Plan a well-rounded program.

After Response

Get the support of a local non-profit organization.
Gather facts and draw up a proposal; submit it to OEO under a CAP program.
Meanwhile try to conduct with facilities at hand an unofficial Head Start program while the CAP proposal is being processed.

9. On your first day in Amora Placita, you meet the Anglo mayor who is also a county commissioner. He says to you, "There isn't any poverty here. I'm sorry for your sake that you've been assigned here. I respect you for your idealism, but we believe in doing things for ourselves. We don't want any of this socialistic federal money." What will you do?

Before Response

Be friendly toward him.

Get support from others, i.e., ministers and teachers.

Go about and do things quietly until you have a firm foot in the community.

After Response

Con him! Tell him what he wants to hear; be pleasant and don't alienate him.

Work with positive forces in the community.

Reassure the mayor of your innocence; ask him for help.

Before Response

Ask him to go calling with me.

If he refuses, check the area out myself.

After Response

Smile, thank him, and then gather data.

Ask him to show me the area.

Put him in charge of a committee consisting of his friends -- then play them off against one another; make him feel like a big shot.

Before Response

Observe the situation by attending public meetings and by talking with people.

Get concrete information; then see the mayor and tell him about what I found.

After Response

I would not argue with him, but on my own get acquainted with some of the influential people of the town; quietly ask questions and for their suggestions on how to improve the existing conditions.

10. Your sponsor calls you in and says that he has heard a rumor that you have been drinking in your room and that he knows you have had a person of the opposite sex in your room with you on two occasions. He states that he considers your behavior immoral and wants you to leave. What will you do?

Before Response

Try to prove to him that it wasn't true; if after much persuasion I couldn't convince him, I'd ask for a transfer.

After Response

Prove it isn't true; if the person was there, use a little deception; tie it up in some way with some phase of my work so that my sponsor would no longer think I am immoral.

Before Response

Tell him you're sorry about the rumors, that they are untrue, that you'd like another two weeks to prove yourself, and that at the end of that time you'll leave if he wishes you to.

After Response

Say, "Yes, that was my brother who is (something official)."

"The doctor ordered liquor for medicinal purposes." (Make up some fantastic disease.)

Before Response

Tell him it was just a rumor (if it was); if it wasn't, tell the truth or lie -- depending on the sponsor.

After Response

Get sponsor off my back without being deselected.

Tell him it was a lie; that it was a sociological experiment.

Tell him it was an investigator from the governor's office or from Washington, and that we talked about sponsors and how great mine is.

Interpretation - Schedule J

The responses of the trainees were analyzed for three factors:

(1) The recognition of specific agencies, organizations or positions as resources.

(2) The recognition of the value of an indirect apporach avoiding confrontation.

(3) The recognition of the interdependence of community influentials.

If two of these three elements appeared in the after response but not in the before response, the answer was rated as a change in a favorable direction.

Far more references to specific agencies, organizations, and positions appear in the after responses than before. This is seen as a natural result of practical field experience and classroom lectures which were designed to give trainees a recognition of resources that can be used in rural areas. However, the most interesting change appears in the way in which trainees propose to solve the more complex problems which involved human relations -- particularly those cases in which the trainee is apt to find himself in complete disagreement with an authority figure. Such situations are described in Questions 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10. On the after responses to these questions, trainees showed a tendency toward using indirect approaches and other community influentials as intermediaries in the change process. Further, the preference for immediate action is replaced frequently by a more patient problem-solving approach.

	No Change	Change
1	23	7
2	21	9
3	18	12
4	14	16
5	18	12
6	16	14
7	21	9
8	13	17
9	14	16
10	19	11

Finally, the willingness to use "deception" appears often in the after responses; only once in the before responses. A word should be said about the concept of "deception" as it was used in training. A lie was defined as rendering another person's environment unpredictable. Deception, properly practiced, does not have this effect. Deception is practiced if the trainee makes the conscious decision to permit another person to continue to hold an opinion about what the trainee believes which is, in fact, incorrect. The responses to Question 9 show the use of deception. The trainee could have informed the mayor that there was, indeed, poverty in Amora Placita. If this were done, polarization would occur and the possibility for a dialogue essential to learning would be markedly decreased. Instead, the trainee agrees, or more correctly, fails to disagree.

Human beings practice deception most of the time without thinking about it. However, what one does by habit (for example, "Yes, that is a beautiful dress.") is not a useful tool because it cannot be used rationally. An understanding of the concept of deception makes it possible for the trainee to reduce the frequency with which he unintentionally offends other persons. There are times when a trainee may wish to offend a community influential as a tactic in support of his strategy. The skillful use of deception allows him to make such plans.

VII.

The Selection Procedure

One of the most important aspects of the training program was the final decision regarding the capability of the individual trainee to meet the demands of a difficult permanent field placement in a poverty environment as a useful contributor in the solution of poverty problems. Each trainee was interviewed during the first and fourth weeks by a clinical psychologist. Each trainee was rated for adaptability, tolerance, ability to deal with problems in the field by the eight staff supervisors. Trainees were judged, in addition, according to their performance in the small permanent groups assigned to the supervisors. The senior staff had observed each of the trainees in the diverse settings of the classroom, the hotels, on the streets of the community, in many field placements, as well as in individual consultation. Each of the trainees was also interviewed with respect to his particular desires for placement. The information from all these sources was assembled during the fourth week for presentation at the selection board, which was composed of representatives from VISTA Washington, the Project Director, the Associate Director, and the Program Psychologist. Together the University and Washington staffs made decisions about the retention of each trainee in the light of the available placement settings.

Ninty-seven persons had begun training during the two programs. Four were transferred during the second week of the VISTA I program on Washington's invitation to be specially trained to work in Alaska. One of the trainees was a researcher who took part in the program as a participant observer. One trainee chose to leave training at the end of the second week of VISTA I. The staff did not discourage the trainee's decision. One trainee from VISTA I completed the training, but upon consultation with the university staff and Washington staff, decided not to enter the field.

In all, ninety VISTA trainees became VISTA volunteers. All of the trainees in VISTA II received field assignments.

A description of the VISTA trainees as seen from the point of view of the University's clinical psychologist provides insight into the nature of VISTA trainees as a group and their response to training.

Staff Report

VISTA trainees responded with marked anxiety to the presence of an examining psychologist. Many were fearful that their private motivations for joining VISTA would be revealed. Others reacted with a form of test anxiety commonly found in college student populations. These anxieties were seen as conbributing to the effectiveness of the clinical interviews. The trainees were more strongly supported, and the psychopathological cues for which the psychologist was indeed looking were more easily detected in anxious interviewees.

The psychological interviews, conducted at the end of the first and fourth weeks of training, were both diagnostic and supportive. The psychologist tried to assess the stress tolerance, work capacity, thought organization, and interpersonal style of each trainee during the interviews. Hypotheses about the individual's adjustment were established during the first interview and confirmed or altered following the second session. Consultation with the training staff was also used to provide the fullest possible picture of each volunteer's strengths and weaknesses. (Originally it was planned to use this information for fitting trainees to the most appropriate job assignments. However, little information about placements was available at the time of the final selection boards, and most of the placements were made in ignorance of important characteristics of the work settings to which the volunteers were assigned.)

As a group the trainees at Monte Vista were superior to the average college student, both in intelligence and emotional adjustment. Many revealed very substantial motives for VISTA. These included the sublimation of personal experiences with poverty, the testing out of career choices in social service, and a desire to strike out for themselves in the world and demonstrate their competence. More than eighty per cent of the group showed, in the interviews and in their daily work in the field, their capacity to cope with conflict and provide substantial help to others.

However, the trainees also presented diverse personality problems, the most prominent of which was depression. In most instances, depressive feelings were associated with internalized anger toward parental figures and with incomplete emancipation from the family. These depressed and angry youths tended to deny dependency strivings, and also showed marked insecurity and lack of self-confidence. However, few had suicidal preoccupations or marked difficulty with sleeping and eating.

Several of the older trainees also revealed problems with depression. Retirement or loss through death or divorce were the prominent causal factors with this group.

Although in several instances the symptoms described were of sufficient severity to cause real concern on the part of the staff, every one of the depressed trainees completed the program, and early reports from the field indicate that they are doing well. There is no question but that the activity, sense of purpose, and group cohesiveness generated through VISTA training had a pronounced therapeutic effect on feelings of loss, loneliness, and anomie. Whether this effect of training is retained through the year of placement and beyond remains to be seen.

Characterological problems associated with acting out negatively toward authority were also seen in the trainee group. These ranged in severity from the argumentative and challenging volunteer to the one who openly violated important group norms. During training the staff routinely set limits with these volunteers, and their response to limit setting was an important consideration in selection. Preliminary indications from the field are that volunteers with authority problems are more likely to develop serious conflicts with sponsors and others after training.

The volunteer with problems in the area of socialization also came under close scrutiny. A few of the older trainees presented lifelong patterns of isolation and withdrawal. However, they had been able to achieve a fair degree of internal stability, and their motivation for VISTA was positive and directed toward enriching their social experience. Although frequently seen as different by other volunteers, this older group did well in training.

Among the younger volunteers were a few who evidenced severe and poorly-controlled anxiety focused around their role as group members. They also revealed lifelong patterns of inadequate social adjustment and inability to work productively with others. The staff was concerned about whether these volunteers would, under stress, decompensate (crack up) and behave in a bizarre manner. In two trainees, anxiety mounted to the point where they were unable to function and they were deselected. The others received strong support from the staff and completed their training.

Some clinical problems were notable by their absence in the trainee group. Volunteers did not present problems around sexual deviation, mental retardation, or paranoia. By and large, the trainees were considered to be an emotionally well-adjusted group. In addition, the enthusiasm and drive which they brought to training was infectious and provided all of the participants in the program with a renewed faith in America, and a deeply felt respect for the selflessness and dedication of her youth.

James Selkin, Ph.D.
10/16/65

VIII.

Program Summary

The preceding description of the University of Colorado VISTA training program has presented many of the details needed to understand how the training program was planned and executed. The interpretations of attitude tests, objective tests, and open-ended questions reveal many of the underlying assumptions which the staff made about the nature of poverty, the role of the VISTA volunteer in the War on Poverty, and how the volunteer should be trained for his important tasks. The expectations of the staff were met in full and, as can be seen from the analysis of Schedule E, the overwhelming majority of the VISTA trainees also reported that their expectations of the training program were fulfilled. Trainees' basic concepts about the causes of poverty appear to have been modified. General strategies for attacking the problems of poverty appear to have been understood.

The training staff recognize that there were many shortcomings in the training, particularly in the first program. Preliminary reports about the problems encountered by the VISTA I volunteers during their first month in the field indicated that the program had not effectively inculcated the need for patience and moderation in entering the community to all trainees. Nor did the VISTA I program successfully modify all trainees' notions about the power and resources they would be able to command in their respective community placements. Although most trainees increased their level for the tolerance of ambiguity, the level was, in too many cases, insufficient to permit them to bide their time in entering the community gradually.

The information gained from VISTA I was introduced with apparently successful results in the second training program, which began the day that the first program ended. VISTA II trainees, we believe, were given a thorough inventory of the real problems they would face. During the final week of the program a letter-reading session was conducted before the trainees in which each of the difficulties discovered by trainees in the first program were covered in minute detail. This session, we believe, gave VISTA II trainees a far more real assessment of what they should expect.

Should the University staff conduct additional VISTA training programs, the ratio of time in the field to time in the classroom would be modified to give slightly more emphasis to the former. This change would be introduced to meet the expectations of trainees. As is the case with many kinds of education which are followed by immediate application of knowledge in a serve situation, anxiety about the future mounts rapidly through the program. It becomes virtually impossible to teach anything but the most practical content during the final two weeks.*

This change would not modify the model of field placement used during the summer. The original notion of short (half-day to two-day) intense field experience integrated through small group discussion with classroom lecture and demonstration appears to be sound both in theory and practice. Further, this pattern provides the opportunity for the trainee to obtain the broad contact with problems and resources essential to understanding and dealing with poverty in the rural United States. It was this basic model which was put to the test during the two VISTA training programs. The training staff believe that it was shown to be a superior process for training persons to work in rural poverty.

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* Kenneth R. Hammond and Fred Kern, "Scheduling Effect," TEACHING COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL CARE, Commonwealth Fund, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1959, pp. 134-135.

The University staff found the experience of conducting two VISTA training programs immensely rewarding. We enjoyed the opportunity to work with the staff of VISTA from Washington, D. C. The freedom which they permitted the staff made innovation and flexibility a real part of the program.

In conclusion, the actual effects of the training program will be determined by the performance of the VISTA volunteers in the field. To our knowledge as of this writing, seventy-nine of the ninety VISTA volunteers placed in the field remain at work in VISTA. Nine of the eleven who have resigned voluntarily or otherwise were placed with one sponsor. The staff are not yet informed of the reasons for these resignations and learned of the departures informally. We await with great interest an analysis of the various situations where problems arose so that this knowledge can be used to improve further educational experiments of this nature.

As epilogue, the reader may be interested in the residues that remain of the training program in the San Luis Valley and in Monte Vista, Colorado. In September the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce voted to request that Monte Vista be made a permanent site for VISTA training in the United States. A letter to this effect was sent to VISTA headquarters in Washington, D. C. Further, four VISTA volunteers were requested by the community to remain in Monte Vista to conduct a Head Start preschool program. This group of VISTA's received the first Head Start follow-up grant given in the United States and are presently conducting the program. Two additional VISTA volunteers were placed in the Valley at the request of Center and Del Norte, Colorado to work in community development and sanitation.

Contrary to predictions, all of the structures erected by the VISTA trainees, including the playground equipment, remain in excellent condition, and the swings and teeter-totters are used daily by the children of Lariat.

Appendix

(Schedules A, C. D, E, and J appear in the text of the program analysis section and are not reproduced here.)

The Idea Log was a major source of information which kept the staff in daily contact with the ways in which trainees were responding to training. The logs were handed in each day to the staff supervisors, who presented the basic content during the daily staff meeting. The logs were prepared in duplicate on pressure sensitive paper. Each trainee kept a copy of the log for his own use in reviewing his training experience.

Name________________________________ Date ____________

University of Colorado
VISTA TRAINING PROJECT

Log

Description of Activity	Other Persons Involved	Comment
Morning		
Afternoon		
Evening		

1. What particular idea(s) of those presented today, would I like to see implemented in my own program? (Please note ideas regardless of source, but be sure to list source.)

2. What anticipated problem(s) would be alleviated or solved if this idea can be implemented?

3. How can the idea(s) be implemented? What conditions and action will be required?

4. What additional information would I like to have about the idea(s) listed above?

Name ______________________ Group ____________ Date __________

LISTENING LOG

1. Reference to Medical Needs:

2. Employment:

3. Time Perspective:

4. Leadership:

5. Reference Group or Groups:

6. Bureaucratic Static:

7. The Law:

8. Fun Behavior:

9. Reverence:

10. Geographic Mobility:

11. Dependency on the Public:

12. The Schools:

Name ______________________________ Schedule B

University of Colorado
The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

You have 30 minutes to write an essay entitled: "The Present Structure of Poverty in My Community." Cover these four areas:

1. Describe the poverty in your community as best you can, both qualitatively and quantitatively.
2. Explain why this poverty exists, in your opinion.
3. Present your solution to the problem of poverty in your community.
4. Describe what you perceive to be the present obstacles to your solution of the problem.

(During the October, 1964 training program this essay was administered and content analyzed to develop Instrument D. In the VISTA programs, the instrument was again used. Upon analysis, the content did not differ in any significant way from the ideas presented by Employment Service personnel. As a consequence, the staff made the decision to use Schedule D without modification.)

Name ______________________________ Schedule G

University of Colorado
The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

MOTIVATIONAL INSTRUMENT. Please check each of the following if it describes something you definitely had in mind as a reason for joining VISTA:

_____ 1. Supplement an unduly narrow or technical college training.

_____ 2. Get a chance to express ideas I had been thinking and reading about.

_____ 3. Make new friends.

_____ 4. Improve my intellectual skills.

_____ 5. Find solutions to contemporary problems.

_____ 6. Meet people who are quite different from me.

_____ 7. Learn things which will enable me to contribute to my community.

_____ 8. Continue my education.

_____ 9. Become more sure of myself.

_____ 10. Learn what others think about social problems and poverty.

_____ 11. Talk with people who have more intellectual skills and interests than my usual "social" friends.

_____ 12. Gain insight into myself and others.

_____ 13. Help me develop skills in dealing with people.

_____ 14. Escape the narrowness of my community.

_____ 15. Take a year off to think things over.

_____ 16. Help persons less fortunate than I.

_____ 17. To take part in a new social experiment.

_____ 18. Substitution of VISTA for military service.

Name ______________________________

Schedule H

(Schedule H was designed to accompany a taped conversation between a VISTA volunteer and a person from the poverty community who was seeking assistance. For time and technical reasons this instrument was not administered.)

The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

1. Please list what you consider to be the important points in John's story.

2. How would you describe the problem that John believes he has?

3. Make a list of questions that you will have to have answers to before you can take any action.

4. List the possible resources that you might be able to use to help John based on the information you already have.

Name ______________________________ Schedule I

The Monte Vista Project
Training Program for Volunteers in Service to America
June 19 - September 10, 1965

Following is a list of terms which may be heard in connection with the War on Poverty. Please define the terms and give a brief description of their relevance or function.

ADC	Aid to Dependent Children
OMAT	Office of Manpower and Training
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
MDTA	Manpower Development and Training Act
NYC	Neighborhood Youth Corps
CAP	Community Action Program
OAP	Old Age Pension
AND	Aid to the Needy Disabled
OEO	Office of Economic Opportunity
Title 3B	Section of Economic Opportunity Act dealing with migrants and seasonally unemployed agricultural workers
YOC	Youth Opportunity Center
USES	United States Employment Service
Job Corps	Economic Opportunity Program providing literacy and vocational training to 16-21 year-old youth in a setting removed from their place of residence
Title 6	Section of Economic Opportunity Act which authorizes VISTA
DVS	Division of Volunteer Support
VA	Veteran's Administration
Voc. Rehab.	Vocational Rehabilitation Administration
NRA	National Recovery Act